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WEEKS AFTER REGISTRATION, MANY STUDENTS STILL FINALIZING J-TERM PLANS

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN
Copy Editor

The Registrar's Office estimated that 2,681 students intended to register for 2,634 class seats for the upcoming winter term. There were a total of 157 students, including 141 upperclassmen, who were unregistered for a winter term course as of Nov. 30. Grace Spatafora, dean of curriculum, shared that based on data from the previous three years, the college's algorithm predicted that anywhere from 60–100 students would engage in off-campus internships. But at the time of registration this year, that number turned out to be only six.

Spatafora explained that the misconjecture is partially due to upperclassmen's unfinalized internship plans. Decisions about some internship opportunities were not released by Nov. 7, when students began J-Term registration. Cheryl Whitney Lower, associate director for internships & early engagement at the Center for Careers and Internships (CCI), reported that as of Dec. 5, 63 on- or off-campus internships had been approved, and she anticipates that between 83–87 J-Term internships will ultimately be approved. Until their plans are finalized, some students planning to do internships are currently filling seats in classes that they will not ultimately take.

Still, the initial low internship engagement has puzzled the administration. J-Term is intended to accommodate first- and second-year students by allowing them to take classes they may not have otherwise taken, fulfill requirements or explore what they may want to major in. For juniors and seniors, the time provides opportunities to take on independent research, have more real-world experiences and figure out a future after Middlebury, according to Spatafora.

Spatafora believes that the initial internship numbers were lower than expected because upperclassmen who missed out on previous J-Term experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic want to take in-person courses more than ever. Also, Spatafora said, many students who took time off during the pandemic have returned. This has contributed to limited space in J-Term classes as a larger than expected number of students were interested in taking a course.

"These students have already missed out, they had to go home. They want to be on campus with their friends. That's what's driving part of the enrollment pressures.

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Tammy Austin steps into role as new director of counseling

OLIVIA PINTAIR/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
Centeno House, which houses the Center for Health and Wellness.

By OLIVIA PINTAIR
Online Editor

Tammy Austin began her role as the new director of counseling at Middlebury College on Monday, Nov. 28, filling the position left vacant by former director Alberto Soto, who resigned in August.

A licensed marriage and family therapist with more than 19 years of experience in the field of community mental health, Austin came to the college after serving as the director of child and family services at the Clara Martin Center in Randolph, Vt., working with newborns to 26-year-olds who struggle with mental health and substance abuse issues. Currently, she serves as the chair of the Vermont Board of Allied Mental Health.

"I have been interested in counseling at the college level since I myself was in undergraduate school as a Peer Mentor, supporting classmates in accessing the services," Austin wrote in an email to The Campus. "Young adulthood is a pivotal time in an individual's life. To be able to provide the services and support necessary to help them be successful is extremely important."

In her role, Austin will oversee the counseling department, one of the five offices within the Center for Health and Wellness, where she will work to strengthen communication between counseling and the other offices in the center and the student body.

"It will be my responsibility to ensure that access to services is available, consult with campus partners on mental health situations, and participate as a member of the Center for Health and Wellness leadership team," Austin wrote.

Austin arrives at a campus where many students report struggling with mental health. In response to The Campus' 2022 Zeitgeist survey, one student wrote, "Middlebury destroyed my mental health." Another wrote they had "never experienced mental health issues until Midd."

Some have even described the fast-paced and evaluative nature of the college as antithetical to wellness.

In an op-ed published in 2019, Arthur Martins '22.5 wrote, "While struggles like mine can appear individual and inconsequential, they are deeply rooted in our collective ideas of what constitutes a normal college experience."

Recently, additional op-eds published in The Campus have directed criticism toward the college's mental health programing, specifically noting the lack of counselors of color and repeatedly calling for increased representation.

"As a woman of color, I understand the frustration, discomfort and suspicion that may arise due to not being able to find a counselor that does not hold a shared identity," said Selena Valladares Ortiz '23, a mental health peer educator.

Throughout his tenure as Director of Counseling, which spanned less than a year, Soto seemed to understand this frustration as well, emphasizing the compounding effects of systemic oppression on the mental health of individuals forced to bear its burdens.

"The body and mind cannot be healed solely by self-care and focusing on surviving. At some point we must address and identify the source of all our psychic suffering, which is whiteness, heteronormativity, patriarchal systems, etc.," said Soto in an interview with The Campus in September 2021. In response to these comments, Soto faced backlash from multiple right-wing news sources and websites.

"I think given Covid-19, given the conversation around race and police brutality, given the conversation around class, our students today in the 21st century are dealing with amazingly painful issues. There's a lot of trauma that our students are experiencing," said Vice President of Student Affairs Smita Ruzicka, who supports and oversees the Center for Health and Wellness and worked as a mental health counselor before her career at Middlebury.

According to data from the 2022 Zeitgeist survey, students of color across all races answered "no" to the question "Are you happy?" more often than their white peers. Additional data showed that a higher proportion of students of every race other than white had used counseling services at some point during their time at the college. However, despite the additional barriers to mental health and well-being that can arise while navigating a predominantly white institution (PWI) as a student of color, the only available counseling support for students of color comes from a nearly all-white on-campus counseling staff.

"As a counselor of color, there's not many of us," Ruzicka said. "And then I think we continue to have a challenge of recruiting folks of color, especially to a state like Vermont. We have been thinking about what compensation and benefits look like, [and if there] are ways we can sort of make that more attractive."

Ruzicka noted that efforts to

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SPORTS

FIELD HOCKEY CLAIMS FIFTH CONSECUTIVE NATIONAL TITLE

COURTESY OF LARRY LEVANTI
Coach Katherine DeLorenzo puts Middlebury's name at the end of the bracket.

By LEXI LINAFELTER
Sports Editor

For athletes and fans alike, opportunities to witness moments of true greatness in sports that border on unbelievable are few-and-far-between.

In a tense and exhilarating match against Johns Hopkins for the 2022 national title, the Panthers secured their fifth consecutive national championship, proving, yet again, that there is something incredibly unique about the tradition of Middlebury field hockey. The game was a gritty, thrilling and unrelenting battle for possession, as the two teams remained in a deadlock, but an overtime goal scored by Amy Griffin '24.5 finally set the two teams apart.

Since preseason, the team has worked tirelessly toward technical goals to speed up the offense, improve scoring opportunities and seamlessly move the ball down the field. The rewards have certainly reflected that work, as the team earned a 21–1 record, a conference title and a 7th national championship trophy. To add onto these milestones, the national championship game secured goalie Grace Harlan '22.5's place as Middlebury's all-time career holder in shutouts (25), earned the team three all-tournament honorees and brought the team's total up to 107 goals scored, the most scored in a single season in the program's history. Throughout the season, opponents scored a mere 12 total goals against the Panthers.

Reflecting on a season of new challenges and triumphs, Head Coach Katherine DeLorenzo spoke to the unique demeanor of each player on the team and how every member of the team encapsulates the soul of the program.

"The members of this team truly represent all that I'd ever want to have on a team — the grit, the love, the intellect, the ethic, the hope and the relationships — when what you're chasing is the greatest possible performance, then what you're chasing never has to change, regardless of if you've won 50 in a row, won just one game or just lost one," DeLorenzo said.

It is certainly this mindset, and the marked success accompanying her throughout her 14 years leading the program, that contributed to DeLorenzo's induction into the NFHCA Hall of Fame, which will take place on Jan. 23, 2023.

From an outsider's perspective, Middlebury field hockey has become an unerring NCAA dynasty that continues to set the standard for Division III athletics in unprecedented ways. Yet, their titles, rings, conference championships and individual honors reflect only a small portion of the achievements deserving of celebration. Rather, the most memorable moments of the season often came from players' ability to execute when faced with unfamiliar challenges.

According to DeLorenzo, the part of Middlebury field hockey that truly astonishes opponents are the non-starters, who take opportunities in critical moments: "with less preparation and a steely-eyed, unwavering commitment to mental preparation, they can step on the field and make great plays. That is what defines Middlebury field hockey."

The tradition of Middlebury field hockey is a complex machine of drive, unrelenting devotion to excellence, trusting and authentic relationships and commitment. As much as the All-American and All-Conference honorees this season, moments of brilliance from players like Ellie Hughes '24.5, Caroline Haggerty '24.5 and Kelly Cooper '25 offer a glimpse into the depth and commitment of the program that cannot be found elsewhere.

No year of Panther field hockey has looked quite like the last, but through years of unprecedented accomplishments and successes to celebrate, one thing is clear: the team's ability to take control with grace under pressure has carried them to this point, and their confidence and hunger in every moment on the field has kept them on top.

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Rohatyn Global Fellows program allows students to investigate the international implications of their studies

By AMANDA MANOOGIAN
Staff Writer

This fall, the Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs (RCGA) launched the Rohatyn Global Fellows (RGF) program, an initiative providing sophomores, juniors and seniors the opportunity to delve deeper into the international implications of their chosen majors.

The new RGF program expands upon the Rohatyn Global Scholars (RGS) program — established last year by Professor of International and Global Studies Nadia Horning and Professor of Political Science and Rohatyn Center Director Mark Williams — which was geared toward first years interested in learning about global affairs, irrespective of their intended major. Williams and Professor of Political Science Amit Prakash established the RGF program this fall to continue exposing students to the global resources available at Middlebury and its schools abroad.

Both Horning and Williams emphasized the "global mindset" that they aim to instill in their students. "The idea is to help students think beyond themselves: their person, their nationalities and their interests... We also want students to transcend disciplinary boundaries and represent a variety of academic interests," Horning said.

The RGS program has expanded in one year from 14 to 20 students. Horning celebrated the success the program has achieved in its second year.

"We feel the pressure of more students wanting to participate... the program could easily balloon up to 40 students if we had the resources," she said.

Williams defined the global mindset as "an ability [for students] to understand more clearly their place in the world and the way that they can maximize their Middlebury education by taking advantage of global opportunities." Often, Williams said, students are unaware of Middlebury's global resources until they are too late in their education to utilize them.

The year-long RGF program includes students from diverse majors, backgrounds and experiences. Each student is formally associated with one of the Rohatyn Center's six thematic disciplines, selected based on their major affiliation.

These programs include Global Economics; Global Health and Medicine; Global and International History; Global Trends in Autocracy and Democracy; Power, Wealth, and Global Political Economy; and Security and Global Affairs.

Students accepted to the RGF program get to attend small group events with speakers, converse with experts in their field and receive guidance on their senior thesis plans. The fellows are also eligible for an RCGA research grant, a stipend for unpaid global or internationally-focused summer internships, or an RGCA-CCI "career trek" to Washington, D.C.; New York City; or Monterey, Calif.

The Global Fellows convene monthly for a lunch hosted by the RGF. The fellows have the chance to discuss global issues and to meet with Prakash, the program director.

Paige Osgood '23, is one of two Global Health and Medicine fellows in the RGF program. Osgood worked with the other fellow, Nellie Zhang '23, to organize and moderate two events this semester: a talk with Katherine Mayall from the Center for Reproductive Rights about global abortion rights and another with Dr. Kamari Clarke on metafictions and radical humanism.

In an email to The Campus, Osgood wrote about how she enjoys "helping out at these events as it's an excellent opportunity to network with the speakers and the Global Health and Medicine track directors." The current directors for this subgroup are Kristin Bright, assistant professor of anthropology, and Pam Berenbaum, the director of the global health studies program.

"The program really facilitates close, one-on-one time with speakers and professors outside of my major's department in a way that I've rarely had anywhere else on campus," Osgood added.

Horning and Williams are enthusiastic about the potential for both RGS and RGF to expand in the near future.

"We hope that the association with the Rohatyn Center will eventually mean something in a few years," Williams said. RGS and RGF students receive a certificate acknowledging their work at the end of the year, but they do not receive official grades.

Horning and Williams both discussed the potential for the RGS and RGF programs to expand globally. "We are really interested in working in conjunction with Middlebury Schools Abroad... if we could do programs with the schools abroad, we could leverage the potential synergy between the Vermont campus and the rest of the world," Williams said. This spring, the RGS and RGF programs plan to do an exchange with students from Brazil.

Osgood encouraged students interested in global studies to apply for next year's cohort.

"This is a great program, and I highly recommend it to anyone interested in or studying global relations," she said. "Everyone who does the program is highly interested in their track."

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Whether this is a consequence of the pandemic that's going to persist or not, we just have to wait and see," Spatafora said.

Additionally, the annual EMT course, which typically has a 20-person capacity, could not be offered this year due to staffing shortages, according to Spatafora.

Lower noted that a fairly large number of student internships this year are located in Vermont or on campus. These include VTDigger, the Parent Child Center, the State's Attorney's Office, Addison County Regional Planning Commission, Gifford Medical Center, the Conservation Law Foundation and Treeline Terrains, among others. On-campus internships include the Admissions Office, the Athletic Department, Oratory Now and the Theatre Costume Shop.

Lucia Snyderman '23.5 took the fall 2020 semester off to avoid the Covid-19 restrictions and did a Sea Education Association (SEA) program instead. As a senior, she struggled to find a J-Term class.

"I tried registering for either of my classes and both filled up immediately," Synderman said. "I emailed the professors and one of them put me on his waitlist, but he said he doesn't think he'll take anyone off. I am hoping someone drops so I can get in, and my backup is doing my thesis which I am going to do anyway, but I really want to take a class in addition to doing research."

Synderman has since managed to enroll in Conservation Genomics (BIOL 0325) with winter term Professor Ellie Armstrong, one of her top picks.

Mira Irfan '23.5 had several classes she was hoping to register for, including "Marketing and Brand Strategy," "Hindi for Beginners" and "Current Affairs Documentary Film," all of which were full. She is not interested in doing an independent study. "I think sacrificing small class sizes is worth it if everyone is able to take a class that they are interested in," Irfan wrote.

Spatafora noted the impacts of over-enrollment. "If we've got an enrollment issue, we have larger classes than we would like, which impacts faculty-student ratio, and impacts the accessibility of courses to our students. There is not a lot I can do about the size of the classes right now, other than to say they will come down again. That is not much comfort to someone who is getting ready to graduate," Spatafora said.

Spatafora plans to meet and work closely with the CCI to ensure that internships are finalized earlier so that potential internship-bound students do not occupy a large number of seats in future J-Term classes.

Tammy Austin steps into role as new director of counseling

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recruit counselors of color are ongoing.

"We have been very strategic about sending job listings to specific list-serves like Black Psychologists, Asian-American Psychologists, [and] The Black Social Work Association," Ruzicka said.

"Additionally, one of the reasons we got TimelyCare is not just the availability of Telehealth for students," Ruzicka said. "We knew that we could get a variety of folks who might be representative of our students' diversity."

TimelyCare provides 24/7 access to healthcare and counseling at no additional cost to students.

In response to questions surrounding student calls for a more diverse counseling staff, Austin wrote, "As with any and all concerns on campus, my hope is to learn more about the challenges and explore opportunities that arise with these challenges with an aim to best support the college community. I want students to know that their voice is being heard, and we truly are committed to hiring the right candidates for our community who bring their identities, experiences and clinical expertise."

According to Barbara McCall, associate vice president for student health and well-being, the Health and Wellness Department has been working to respond to student concerns, partnering with student organizations such as the Student Government Association (SGA) Mental Health Committee, MiddSafe, Sex Positive Education for College Students (SPECS) and the Mental Health Peer Educators (MHPE).

This fall, the Center for Health and Wellness also began offering Let's Talk, a resource through which students can access informal and confidential 25-minute consultations with a counselor on a first-come first-serve basis. In addition, the center launched the new Integrated Care Office in April 2022, which offers clinical care for students experiencing complex health and wellness needs, coordinating safety oversight, logistics and communication with other parties involved in students' care in order to increase counselors' capacity to provide direct service hours to students.

"Tammy and I are committed to responding to student feedback, re-building relationships with the campus community after being remote during the pandemic and re-invigorating counseling's outreach programming," McCall wrote in an email to The Campus.

COURTESY OF TAMMY AUSTIN

Tammy Austin started as director of counseling at Middlebury on Nov. 28, 2022.

As the new director of counseling, Austin seeks to help continue to bridge the gap between students and the resources that intend to support them.

"With my position coming on board, we have increased our available appointments by over 10% compared to last year," Austin wrote. "With one more staff counselor position to be hired, we are in a great place for additional capacity."

"I have seen that the counseling department has made it its goal to become more visible to the student population," Valladares Ortiz said. "At Middlebury it is important to highlight mental health care because its environment is conducive to heightening factors that negatively impact mental health."

"We've really tried to think about student mental health not in a vacuum, but as part of a holistic goal of student health and well-being," Ruzicka said.

At a moment when many students are in need of comprehensive support, this effort attempts to make wellness more accessible.

"I am extremely excited to be a part of the Middlebury College community and look forward to meeting as many students, faculty and staff as possible," Austin wrote. "If you see me out and about, please don't hesitate to say hello."

If you'd like to get in touch with Tammy Austin, you can stop by her office at Centeno House or call Counseling Services to schedule a meet and greet appointment. For non-clinical needs, students can reach her at tammya@middlebury.edu.

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Local business highlight: Edgewater Gallery begins "Define 'Small'" Show

By BEN WAGNER
Staff Writer

Middlebury's Edgewater Gallery is a bastion of the fine arts in Addison County, and the state of Vermont. Its two locations, on Merchant Street and Mill Street are filled with artwork, mostly paintings, as well as some photography, ceramics, and woodwork. Light jazz music fills the space, providing another layer of calm.

Theresa Harris is the gallery's director. Harris' earlier career was in textile design, until she started working at Edgewater six years ago. She started in a lower-level, part-time position and worked her way up to being director.

"It's been the best job of my life. And I mean, it's so interesting all the time," Harris said.

The gallery shows work from mainly Vermont-based artists, although it has some pieces from other places around the world. According to Harris, many of the store's visitors have fallen in love with Vermont, and ask whether all of the art is from the state.

Harris noted the important balancing-act showing local work requires. "We love to support artists in Vermont and show their work," she said. "But we also have a lot of New England artists, and some farther away. And that's mostly because I just want to make sure that the collection we have, yes represents local work, but is also just a nice, broad collection."

While one of Middlebury's largest draws for many visitors is the college, some also come to visit and purchase from Edgewater.

"We're the reason a lot of people come to the town," Harris said.

There is also significant overlap between the college community and the gallery visitors. Harris pointed out that many parents stop at Edgewater to look at and purchase paintings as they explore the town of Middlebury.

The gallery sees a cyclical pattern of visitors. Many second home owners come during the summer months to enjoy the warmer weather and Middlebury's close proximity to a number of lakes. Fall foliage season is also a busier time, as more tourists in Vermont means more visitors at Edgewater.

December is also a busy month for Edgewater.

"Not everyone is buying art for the holidays, but we definitely see a bump," noted Harris.

At first, many Edgewater customers were local, but recently, more have been traveling from other parts of the state and New England.

"We have regular customers as much as you can have regular customers [as an art gallery] ... but eventually they literally don't need more [art]," Harris said.

Ben Wagner/The Middlebury Campus
View of Main Street from Edgewater's Gallery at 6 Merchant Street.

The gallery's two locations can be confusing to some, but came about naturally when the owner decided to lease another space in town to display more art. Edgewater Gallery on the Green is located at 6 Merchant's Row, and Edgewater Gallery at Middlebury Falls is located at 1 Mill Street.

"It is really unusual. But we seem to be able to support both galleries, and I really divide the work [so it's] going to where it's going to look best," Harris said.

The gallery on Mill Street used to be the Frog Hollow Crafts Center, which has led some locals to view it as the 'craft gallery,' although Edgewater does not distinguish between the two spaces.

Edgewater has a number of artists it actively partners with, which means the gallery regularly discusses the work they artists are producing, what the gallery would like to see more of, and moving pieces in and out of the gallery. Edgewater also solicits submissions of work from unaffiliated artists once a year.

"We might get 200 submissions from various artists and take two. It has to do with quality, but it also has to do with [the composition of] our collection," Harris said.

Sometimes, a work is rejected because Harris just doesn't think she can sell it. Generally, artists are understanding.

Artists don't earn any money until the work is actually sold. This is a process called consignment, in which the artist hands over the work to the gallery in a contractually-mediated agreement, and once the work is sold, the artist and the gallery split the funds.

"It is a hard pill to swallow for [artists]. You're painting a painting, it's $2,000 and now the gallery is taking half of it," Harris said.

The value, however, for the artist, is all of the promotional and marketing work Edgewater does for their works.

In most cases, the artist sets the price of the work, but Edgewater also consults with them to maximize the chance of a work selling as well as the revenue for both the gallery and the artist.

Price is often based on where an artist is in their career trajectory.

"I do always try to find quality, but also a range of where they [artists] are in their career... And that will give a range of price," Harris said.

The least expensive small works at Edgewater cost around $250, but even small paintings can cost several thousand dollars.

The gallery has a series of shows throughout the year, in an attempt to highlight the work of each of its artists. At the moment, the gallery is showing its current small works in an exhibit titled Define "Small" until Dec. 31.

Working on a small canvas creates hurdles for painters. "It's kind of a unique challenge for an artist," Harris said. "Sometimes these small works are really impactful, just as impactful as you know, a giant canvas."

Small works also tend to be more affordable."We really don't want people to think they can't afford art," Harris said.

Even though students from the college likely aren't looking to hang a piece of art in their dorm room, nor are they ready to spend a thousand dollars or so on a painting, the gallery is worth a visit to look around. They are located at 6 Merchant's Row and 1 Mill Street. Both locations are open Sunday and Monday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., as well as Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Festivities Galore: Holiday events in and around Middlebury

By CHARLIE FISCH & ASA STONE
Contributing Writers

With the holidays approaching, Middlebury and other towns in Addison County, including Vergennes, Brandon, Bristol, Salisbury and Rochester, Vt., are hosting various events to celebrate the season. The events are plentiful throughout December, with performances, competitions, parades and shopping events, and ending with a firework display on New Year's Eve at Middlebury Recreation Park.

Middlebury, Brandon, and Vergennes, Vt. are hosting events to encourage holiday shopping at local businesses. Middlebury's next "Midd Night Strolls" will take place on Dec. 8 and 15 from 5–8 p.m. with discounts from restaurants and retailers alike. Brandon's "Moonlight Madness" week (Dec. 5–9) and Vergennes' "Magic on Main" (Dec. 8) follow a similar format with discounts for holiday shoppers.

The holiday spirit was alive in Middlebury this past Thursday, Dec. 1 as town residents and college students gathered for the first Midd Night Stroll. Midd Kid Night was a collaboration between the Middlebury College Student Government Association (SGA), the Better Middlebury Partnership and Middlebury College's Senior Administrative Team.

On MiddKid Night, Middlebury students received $10 in MiddBucks and there were deals at nearly every business in town. While the MiddBucks were a one-night-only special for college students, the deals will continue on Dec. 8 and Dec. 15 with gift cards, raffles, coupons, specials at local restaurants such as Two Brothers Tavern and Shiretown Marketplace, discounts and live performances.

This past Saturday, Dec. 3, Santa and Mrs. Klaus were in downtown Middlebury meeting kids and receiving letters in the Triangle Park Plaza. On the other side of Main Street, there was Hot Cocoa being sold from the newly renovated Hot Cocoa Hut for 25 cents as a special treat for shoppers in town. These events were a culmination of work by the Better Middlebury Partnership, with funding and materials for the Hot Cocoa Hut renovation courtesy of Addison County Board of Realtors and Silver Maple Construction.

Forth 'N Goal Sports, which sells both Middlebury College and unaffiliated sports gear on Main Street is one shop that draws substantial student participation in town. Daniel McIntosh, Forth 'N Goal owner, said that a lot of their promotions are happening on a day-to-day basis, so the best way to catch a deal is to walk down to the store or attend one of the upcoming Midd Night Strolls.

"[The Midd Night Strolls] are amazing and [have] had great turnout," McIntosh told The Campus. He added that this is the time of year when Forth 'N Goal makes money, but it can be difficult to advertise the store's promotions.

McIntosh said that advertising a promotion on a certain date can prevent people from coming into the store until that date, which might lead to a loss of money for the business. Foley Brothers Brewing, located in Brandon, Vt., will be at the next two Strolls, which McIntosh said he expects will probably bring in even more people.

While not a part of the Midd Night Strolls, the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op does run a holiday promotion as a part of its monthly deal for Middlebury students. The December's Campus Combo, which is redeemable with a College I.D., is a Free 6.3oz Tony's Chocolonely Bar with the purchase of any Sandwich, Soup, or Salad Bar item throughout the month of December.

Numerous performances and screenings are also being held to bring in the holiday spirit. The Town Hall Theater in Middlebury is hosting a Winter Solstice Mini-Fest on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. with $20 admission. Matt Flinner, a Grammy-nominated mandolinist, will perform with Low Lily, a musical group. The group will be playing music to welcome the winter solstice and celebrate the holidays. The Theater is also hosting a screening of the Polar Express on Dec. 11 at 2 p.m., at which it will offer hot chocolate to movie-goers. The Theater encourages attendees to come in pajamas and hints at an appearance from a special Christmas guest. Tickets are $10 for adults and $5 for children and are available at its website.

The Middlebury College Choir will perform at "Lessons and Carols for Advent and Christmas" at the Middlebury Chapel on Dec. 11 at 4 and 7 p.m. The event will include music and readings from students, faculty and staff. Special selections for the chapel carillon will also be played at the event. Surrounding towns are hosting plays, live nativity scenes and vocal performances, all of which can be found on the Addison County Calendar of Events.

Craft events are also available this holiday season, including two events in Middlebury. The Middlebury Studio School is hosting a holiday gift card workshop on Dec. 10 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event is free and participants will leave with a holiday card or gift tag for their loved ones. Instructors are present to assist and materials are provided. On Dec. 10, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., the Middlebury Public Library is hosting a lantern-making event to celebrate the winter solstice. Several different lantern designs are available and participation is free.

Tom Nevins/The Middlebury Campus
A holiday wreath in town.

Brandon is hosting two larger holiday events, a Christmas decorating contest and a reverse parade. The decorating contest, a tradition of more than 20 years, will take place on Sunday, Dec. 18 at 5 p.m. Contestants can submit their holiday-decorated houses or be nominated into one of four categories, Residential-Traditional, Residential-Whimsical, Civic and Commercial. In a phone interview, Bernie Carr, executive director of the Brandon Chamber of Commerce, described the Residential-Whimsical category as the Clark Griswold category, a nod to the variety of blow-ups and eye-catching decorations typical of this category.

Many homeowners enter the decorating contest multiple years in a row. Particularly during the pandemic, the contest was a significant source of joy for residents. "It was especially strong during Covid-19, it gave them a chance to get in their cars and get around," Carr said.

Carr said his favorites from past competitions include the Brandon Town Hall, houses in the Forest Dale area on a stretch dubbed "competition row," and the house of the Town Hall President, Dennis Marden. Decorations will be up through Christmas and are available for viewing any time.

Brandon is also hosting its third Reverse Parade, a holiday tradition brought about by the pandemic as a replacement for the Brandon Area Toy Project Party. The parade will take place on Dec. 18 from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and starts on High Street in Brandon and ends in the parking lot of the Brandon Inn. Instead of a traditional parade style, floats are stationary while viewers drive by in their cars.

"It's really a phenomenal event for people who have disabilities, or people with young children, or people with older parents because they can participate in something fun and bright without having the physical challenges that can sometimes happen," said Colleen Wright, coordinator for the Brandon Area Toy Project.

This year's parade features Santa and children's literary characters like Paddington Bear, Pete the Cat and Llama. Local organizations contribute nativity scenes, floats with local pageant winners and anyone who shows up can participate. Before the parade, there is also a Pete the Cat party, in which children can meet the book's characters, to celebrate the holidays and get children excited about reading. Events are free and open to all.

"We make an effort to consciously do these things that people can attend without having to spend a lot of money because we get it," Wright wrote to The Campus.

Wright encourages Middlebury students to come and participate in festivities, stressing that these events are inclusive and available to everyone.

For more information and a detailed calendar of holiday events, see the Addison County Calendar of Events.

Editor's Note: Senior Local Editor Maggie Reynolds contributed reporting.

Tri-Valley Transit increases bus service between Middlebury and Burlington to pre-pandemic frequency

By MAYA HEIKKINEN
Editor at Large

COURTESY OF MARY-CLAIRE CROGAN

Tri-Valley Transit (TVT) has doubled frequency of service for the weekday LINK to Burlington as of Nov. 1, and plans to launch midday rides and increase Saturday service this spring. This shift is a return to pre-pandemic services.

For students and community members who rely on public transportation to commute and travel around the Middlebury area, TVT buses are essential. In a region that is largely inaccessible without a personal vehicle, TVT is a crucial public transportation provider. Formerly known as Addison County Transit Resources (ACTR), TVT has a bus that stops on the edge of Middlebury's campus and at the ADK loop.

> As more staff members have been hired, Tri-Valley Transit has increased the frequency for not only the LINK to Burlington but also the Tri-Town Shuttles, Rutland Connector and Snow Bowl Shuttle

The LINK to Burlington is a fare-free express route that runs from Middlebury to Burlington via Route 7 daily Monday through Saturday. The LINK partners with Tri-Valley Transit (Saturday) and Green Mountain Transit (Monday through Friday). According to Tri-Valley Transit's website, popular destinations on the route include Vermont Teddy Bear, Vermont Day School, Shelburne Road, UVM Medical Center and the Burlington Downtown Transit Center.

According to Mary-Claire Crogan, the TVT community relations manager for the Addison region, the frequency of several TVT routes have been lowered since the beginning of the pandemic. This occurred at first due to the Stay Safe, Stay Home shelter-in-place order in March 2020, which limited ridership. Changes to TVT's Dial-a-Ride program also contributed to the lowered frequency of bus routes, a program which provides door-to-door rides for residents who are elderly, living with a disability or eligible for Medicaid.

"Usually Dial-a-Rides are provided by volunteer drivers who use their own cars, but we had to pause that practice for a while to ensure safe distancing," Crogan wrote in an email to The Campus. "Bus drivers stepped up to serve both programs — some bus services continued to meet the needs of essential workers and some bus drivers drove Dial-a-Riders door to door to vital daily appointments."

When TVT resumed operation of the LINK in July 2021, it was only running one round trip per day due to the prevalence of telecommuting and telehealth, which resulted in fewer commuters. However, even as in-person work returned and demand began to return to regular levels, expansion was delayed by the need to hire and train drivers and purchase new buses. Loss of staff to retirement and moving out of state during the pandemic made this difficult, a reflection of the broader nation-wide workforce shortage that has stemmed from the pandemic, according to Crogan.

As more staff members have been hired, Tri-Valley Transit has increased the frequency for not only the LINK to Burlington but also the Tri-Town Shuttles, Rutland Connector and Snow Bowl Shuttle.

While the November changes mostly benefit Addison County commuters who work in Burlington and students attending private schools in Chittenden County, the addition of midday rides and more Saturday service this spring will service a broader range of interests and needs, according to Crogan. Current bus drivers will also benefit from increased hiring at TVT.

"We have been hiring new drivers to provide more capacity. This benefits other drivers because they have more regular shift schedules and more flexibility to schedule time off," Crogan wrote.

The LINK to Burlington currently runs four round trips between Middlebury and Burlington on weekdays and three on Saturdays. Free wifi service is also offered on the bus.

One of Tri-Valley Transit's goals is to promote environmentally conscious practices, specifically, utilizing public transportation. On its website, TVT offers a gas cost savings calculator as well as a carbon savings calculator. These tools provide information on the impact using public transportation could have on individuals and the environment.

"Most of the travel in our region is done in single-occupant cars. Riding the bus helps our region produce less greenhouse gasses [and] improves water quality," TVT states on its website.

Midd Night Stroll brings students, town of Middlebury together

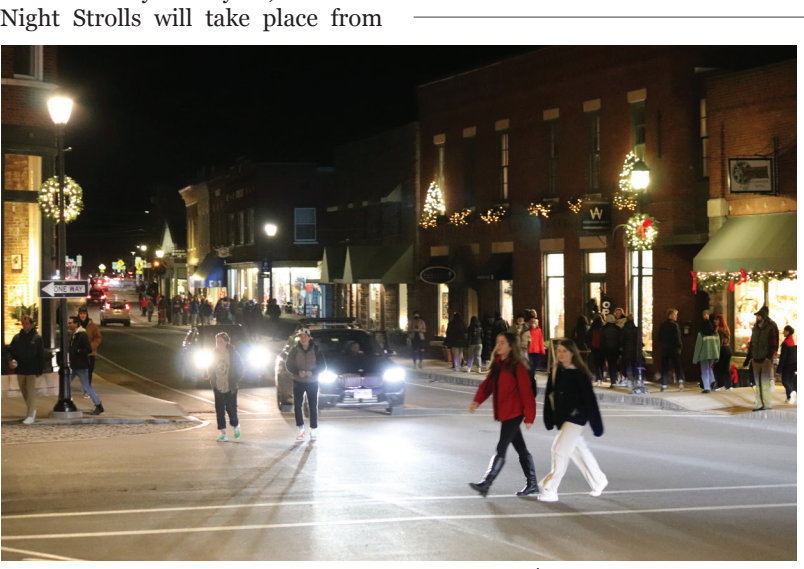
By RACHEL LU
Editor at Large

TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Students and locals wait in line for hot chocolate.

Last Thursday, the town of Middlebury kicked off its first Midd Night Stroll of the year, welcoming 1,468 students with discounted deals in stores, live music, and the occasional run in with Santa Claus and his elves.

The Midd Night Stroll is part of the Very Merry Middlebury initiative by the Better Middlebury Partnership, a civic organization dedicated to supporting local businesses in Middlebury. This year, the Midd Night Strolls will take place from 5–8 p.m. on Dec. 1, Dec. 8 and Dec. 15 with promotions and pop-ups around downtown Middlebury.



TOM NEVINS/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The Town of Middlebury kicked off its first Midd Night Stroll on Thursday, Dec. 1.

> "Our focus was not giving money to students, but rather fostering community between the town and students."

The Student Government Association (SGA) partnered with Better Middlebury for a student-oriented Midd Night Stroll, called MiddKid Night, on Dec. 1. This event included a performance by student a cappella group The Dissipated Eight, several food trucks, a hot chocolate stand and pop-ups for student businesses.

> "We want to come together to find a way to get students in town and be a part of the community."

"Students are undeniably a huge part of this community, but I think a lot of the time we are living in our own little bubble and you could say the same for the town," Shane Silverman '24.5, co-director of external affairs at the SGA, told The Campus. "We want to come together to find a way to get students in town and be a part of the community."

Additionally, students were given $10 each in the form of Middlebury Money — a check that can be used nearly anywhere in the town of Middlebury. The purpose of Middlebury Money is to incentivize spending in town in an effort to bolster its economy. Silverman believes the money helps give students an active role in town, however it is not the only goal of the partnership.

"Our focus was not giving money to students, but rather fostering community between the town and students," Silverman said. "Quite frankly, we need more than just a monetary relationship."

While last year, students were given $20 of Middlebury Money during the Midd Night Stroll, the amount was halved this year. Silverman said students will have another opportunity to receive $10 during the spring semester, so the total amount of money will be the same as last year.

Nancy Dunn, an employee at Sweet Cecily, said the Midd Night Stroll was a complete success. Not only did it boost sales for the night, it was also a way to bring Middlebury students closer to the town.

"That's the point of the whole thing, to familiarize the kids of the college with what's downtown," Dunn told The Campus. "I think these days a lot of people shop either in a mall but mostly online, so they seemed very delighted to be in an actual store owned by a local person."

Abby Schneiderhan '23 added that the experience was a great way to build community between students and the town.

"I had a great time with two of my friends. We went around to all of the vendors and bought an ornament for my dad for Christmas. I was so excited, it was such a good event," Schneiderhan said.

More information on the upcoming Midd Night Strolls on Dec. 8 and Dec. 15 can be found at https://www.experiencemiddlebury.com/events/midd-night-stroll/.

Some tips for navigating finals season

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board

December is upon us, and with it the lovely and long-awaited Finals Season. The days are shorter; your once enjoyable afternoon class now feels like a time warp when you leave only to find it is pitch black outside. We now layer up to brave the long walks between classes, just to feel suffocated when stepping into the intense Proctor heat. Morning conversations of "How's it going?" have turned from lightheartened to the simple "It's going."

We are all in the same boat. Finals are hard. Winter is tough. But, finals do not have to be such a grim week. Winter does not have to feel dreary. We, at The Campus, have prepared a long list of self-care tips to lighten the dark days ahead. Sometimes it may feel like these things are much easier said than done, but it's definitely worth giving them a try to help alleviate some of the finals blues.

Take time for yourself

Oftentimes at Middlebury and during finals season, it can feel like we have to be productive at all times. Although this may be an anxiety-inducing feeling, it is actually not healthy for us to work all the time. Shocker. During these coming weeks, we think that we should all prioritize taking time for ourselves. Even if it is just 10 minutes. It is vital that we give ourselves moments to relax, to think and to just be without schoolwork.

Do not let grades consume you

Fears surrounding final grades can sometimes feel all-consuming. A lower letter grade may feel life-altering. But, in the grand scheme of things, we all know that is not true. Grades do not define us. The stress caused by these grades is incredibly temporary. Even a year from now, you will not remember that exam grade. Balance in our lives at college is important, and concern about grades should not overpower all other aspects of our daily life.

Spend time outside

Although temperatures are dropping by the minute and daylight hours are slipping away, it is still highly recommended to enjoy what you can of the outdoors and the light. Even just a quick walk outside can bring some peace to a stressful day. Fresh air is good for us! It is not a myth.

Find something that brings you joy

Whether it be a comfort TV show, or even a long shower, small things that bring us joy are incredibly important in any season. Especially when stress levels are higher during finals, finding a small activity or thing that may relieve your anxieties for even a short amount of time can change everything. We all work very hard at this school and deserve a little reward. Treat yourself!

Do not spend every night closing out Davis Family Library

Please. We mean this one. Please do not be the last one in Davis for more than two or three nights consecutively. It is concerning to us, to the library staff, and to your sleep schedule. Sleep is important. It helps us be productive and functioning people. An hour of half-asleep research in Davis is considerably less productive than an hour of real sleep. Seriously.

Ask for help when you need it

If you are feeling especially overwhelmed, do not be afraid to reach out to your professors. Most professors are incredibly supportive and accommodating. Everyone wants you to succeed. If you need a few extra days or more support, reach out and ask. There are also plenty of resources on campus that can help with academic support, like the CTLR or Research Help Desk if you have more specific questions. And, the Middlebury Counseling services are there for you for mental and emotional support.

Take care of your health

Sometimes with an overwhelming load of work, it can be easy to push aside self-care. During finals and the winter season, it is as important as ever to prioritize your sleep, drink plenty of water and rest. Winter is an especially taxing time on our bodies, so it is important to take care of ourselves to stay healthy and feel our best going into an exam or ski day.

A hot cuppa

A hot cup of tea, coffee or hot chocolate is good for the soul. Highly recommended.

Embrace hygge (Hoo-guh)

Danish culture works to embrace their dark winter days through hygge. Hygge is a feeling, a vibe, of coziness. It's getting comfortable with people you love, a good book, candles, warm blankets or anything that leaves you "feeling wrapped in a hug." At school, this can mean decorating your dorm room in a way to make it a welcoming space, eating an extra long meal at Proc or getting cozy with a crossword from The Campus. We can take advice from the Danes and take advantage of time indoors during the Winter with hygge. It brings warmth to cold winter days.

Borrow a happy lamp from the circulation desk

It's December. There is minimal daylight. That will take a toll. Thank goodness Davis has happy lamps that can mimic the sunlight that we are missing. Try asking to borrow one next time you're at the circulation desk. Let us know if it works.

Check out student groups performing on campus

Need a study break? This week is still full of awesome student-run events that should not be missed. Check out the Riddim show, or keep an eye out for the Middlebury Discount Comedy show, a cappella concerts, and more.

All in all, with the season of winter and finals upon us, we think it's important to remember to take care of ourselves. We hope that these tips are helpful and that you can approach these coming weeks or months with contentment, joy and peace. Good luck everyone on your finals and have a great winter break.

The eugenics movement and institutional memory at Middlebury

Op-Ed

Aine Powers *is a member of the class of 2024 and* ***Beatrice Donovan*** *is a member of the class of 2023.5*

Though the undergraduate experience is typically limited to a period of four years, we all attend an institution whose history stretches back more than 200 years. As summer Research Fellows sponsored by the Office of the President, Special Collections, and the Scott Center for Religious and Spiritual life, we were tasked with studying a particularly difficult aspect of our institution's history. We investigated the relationship between Middlebury, its Chapel, and the Chapel's original namesake — former Vermont Governor John Abner Mead — and his association with the practice of eugenics. Our research this summer opened our eyes to many of these connections, and we believe that the entire Middlebury community should be familiar with this problematic history and its implications as well.

While the de-naming of the Chapel justly ended the college's physical tie to Mead, we want to ensure that the student body does not forget the history that led to this decision. The eugenics movement began to gain traction in the early 1900s across the country as lawmakers saw it as a scientific solution to problems of social welfare. Policies targeted people with disabilities, people with mental illnesses, people of color, women, people of low economic status, prisoners and anyone else who was marginalized. These individuals were isolated from broader society, institutionalized and, in many cases, sterilized. The topic of eugenics legislation was first proposed in Vermont in the farewell address of outgoing governor and Middlebury alumni, John Abner Mead in 1912. His speech called for the consideration of restrictive marriage legislation, segregation and sterilization in order to limit the so-called defective class. However, the law regarding sterilization that he attempted to pass was vetoed by his successor and since his two-year tenure as governor had ended, he returned to his business pursuits, seemingly ending his engagement with the eugenics movement.

In 1914, Mead reached out to his alma mater expressing his desire to make a donation in order to construct a chapel in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of his graduation from Middlebury, citing his descent from the first white and Christian settlers of Vermont as an important factor in his decision. The President of the college at the time, John M. Thomas, accepted his donation as it aligned with his own personal plans to expand Middlebury's physical campus and elevate its academic standing. Old Chapel had become too small to host the growing student body, and a new chapel offered an opportunity to symbolically demonstrate Middlebury's increasingly elevated status as an institution. Construction on the chapel was completed in 1916 and only four years later, Mead passed away from pneumonia at his home in Rutland. The memory of Mead would largely focus on his accomplishments in his various political and business enterprises — his history of promoting eugenics legislation fell between the cracks.

While the brevity of his engagement with the movement may be the reason his involvement has only surfaced recently, it should not undermine the impact his work had. Mead only mentioned his support of eugenics publicly in one section of one speech, but archival research we completed at the State Archives this summer reinforces the fact that he actively gathered information and inquired about the eugenics movement throughout his tenure as governor. His farewell address and his work as governor were tied to the proposal and passing of future legislation regarding eugenics and the founding of the Brandon Training School, a home for children with mental and physical disabilities, which played an important role in the Vermont eugenics movement in later years. The movement would go on to peak in Vermont with the "Act for Human Betterment by Voluntary Sterilization," which legalized sterilization in 1931. The consent implied by the term "voluntary" was questionable at best. The bill's passage resulted in the sterilization of at least 253 Vermonters, many of whom were residents at the Brandon School.

The connection between Mead and Middlebury College prompted us to investigate additional connections our school had with eugenics unrelated to Mead. Indeed, to understand Middlebury's relationship with eugenics as solely connected to one individual would be incorrect and incomplete. For instance, in 1931, Middlebury President Paul Moody is documented saying "the whole French Canadian population could be wiped out of Middlebury and no one would miss it," clearly expressing a eugenicist mindset. The college also hosted various speeches on eugenics, employed members of the National Congress of Eugenics and is noted as one of 44 colleges in the United States confirmed to have taught eugenics into the 1910s. These connections are not necessarily all that exist between Middlebury and eugenics, but are merely the ones we uncovered. Understanding that this history is larger than John Mead and Middlebury's Chapel is vital to truly understanding this dark chapter of Middlebury's history.

What we hope you take away from these connections is that we as students need to be continually aware of the history of this institution. The buildings in which we attend class and eat are named after individuals whose lives and histories we may never truly know. The dorms we sleep in were once inhabited by students who had a vastly different experience of Middlebury. To forget or ignore the history of our school undermines the notion that we are here to learn and be continuously learning. Forgetting why the Chapel was de-named in the first place neglects the many victims of Vermont's eugenics movement. Ultimately, grappling with how this movement and belief system was pervasive within Vermont and Middlebury College is vital to making sense of the Chapel's place on our campus.

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JP Morgan Chase Bank funds the climate crisis. Is it time for Middlebury to dump Chase?

Op-Ed

Brett Gilman** and **the Sunday Night Environmental Group

Sunday Night Environmental Group (SNEG) has asked Middlebury College to re-evaluate its relationship with JP Morgan Chase Bank, the world's largest funder of fossil fuels. Chase continues to fund new fossil fuel investment at a time when the global climate crisis is worsening. As student activists, we question the college's reliance on Chase Bank in the wake of the principled commitments made to renewable energy in Energy 2028. Middlebury College relies on JP Morgan Chase for a sector of its day-to-day financial operations and utilizes Chase for its purchasing cards (p-cards), a form of payment hardware intended to facilitate transactions for large institutions. SNEG is actively exploring sustainable finance courses of action that align with the college's environmental values.

Chase Bank is the world's worst contributor to fossil fuel investment, funneling over $51.3 billion into the fossil fuel industry in 2021 alone. From 2016 to 2020, Chase provided a total of over $317 billion — 33% more than the next-largest contributor, Citibank, which spent a total of $237 billion between 2016 and 2021. Wells Fargo and Bank of America followed closely behind. Furthermore, and by an even wider margin, Chase is the leading lender to the top 100 companies actively expanding fossil fuels. Chase also boasts a diversified portfolio as the number one banker in many sub-sectors of the industry, including tar sands, arctic, and ultra-deepwater oil and gas infrastructure along with fracking and coal mining. When asked this past September about ending funding for new oil and gas, Chase CEO Jamie Dimon declared, "Absolutely not and that would be the road to hell for America." Scientists have agreed that we direly need to stay beneath the 1.5°C threshold for global atmospheric temperature warming. New fossil fuel infrastructure sends us in the wrong direction at a time where there may be no turning back.

These investments have human costs. A 2019 report from the Rainforest Action Network, a U.S.-based nonprofit organization working to create environmental policy, challenge corporate power, and protect human rights, outlined some of the troubling linkages between Chase's fossil fuel investments and human rights violations. JP Morgan Chase has invested in oil and mining companies operating in the Amazon rainforest. These companies drill for oil on the sovereign land of indigenous peoples without their consent. Such extractive activities have resulted in contamination and health impacts, the deforestation of a diverse biome and critical carbon sink and the violation of indigenous rights. These companies plan to expand their drilling operations, and Chase remains a committed shareholder.

Chase's morally-questionable investments have also been linked to another significant global development: the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Between 2016 and 2020, Chase Bank was the largest global banker of Gazprom, the largest Russian state-owned oil and gas company, allocating roughly $3.5 billion in funds. Of all U.S. companies, Chase provided the largest combination of credit and investment to what financial experts call Russian "carbon bombs," new extraction projects with the capacity to emit carbon in excess of more than one billion tonnes. These fossil fuel investments indirectly fund Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Ten months into the war, Chase remains Gazprom's biggest funder, and they need to be held accountable.

Through their investments in fossil fuels, banks play a large role in creating the climate crisis, and wealthy U.S. banks are the biggest culprits. A critical first step in curbing climate change and initiating drawdown is stopping extractive energy practices that spew carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. We need to hold big banks accountable and push them to cease funding for an industry we cannot survive supporting. After reviewing a collection of scientific literature on climate change, even U.K.-based JP Morgan economists David Mackie and Jessica Murray concluded that if emissions are not cut, "catastrophic outcomes" will undoubtedly result. Yet, like many big banks that are lured by the promise of continued profits, JP Morgan Chase bank has not significantly changed course. This needs to stop.

Institutions and individuals that utilize these banks for their financial operations implicitly support these environmentally-destructive investments. Through collective action, this support can be withdrawn. Climate activism focusing on big banks targets the fossil fuel industry's unyielding need for new capital. The theory is that pressure on banks to make financing oil and gas less profitable — and moreover, socially unacceptable — could boost investments in renewable energy by destabilizing and decreasing funds for dirty energy, thus making such energy sources economically infeasible. Banks have power. They have the power to fund our future, yet JP Morgan Chase funds the climate crisis. All across the globe, people are protesting Chase, and our college, a known leader in sustainability, has the opportunity to join the effort.

Last Friday, SNEG representatives Birch Banks, Ninive Calegari, Kate Goodman, Charlotte Lawrence and Lillian Prime met with Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration David Provost, Director of Investments and Treasury Operations Derek Hammel and Associate Vice President for Finance Alberto Citarella to discuss switching to a new financial institution. SNEG has a strong history of partnership with the administration to implement change on campus that dates back to the successful divestment of the endowment.

Roughly $60 million lies in Middlebury's p-card accounts with Chase, which was discussed during the meeting. The school's contract with Chase is part of a larger financial agreement among St. Michael's College, Champlain College and Middlebury (collectively known as the Green Mountain Higher Education Consortium). Every p-card attached to a college van, every card checked out for student organization purchases and every department card is a JP Morgan Chase Bank card. The use of Chase Bank cards also extends to Middlebury's schools abroad and the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. Thus, every dollar in Middlebury's p-card accounts supports Chase Bank's practice of investing in fossil fuels.

The administrators showed enthusiasm for the campaign and a willingness to consider other banking options for the school's p-card contract, emphasizing the importance of finding a large replacement firm with the infrastructure to handle money efficiently. The p-card contract with Chase is due for renewal in January of 2025, meaning that renegotiations need to occur in mid-2024 at the latest. In the coming months, SNEG is excited to continue pursuing their Dump Chase campaign and will research alternative banks to present to Middlebury's financial administration.

The Sunday Night Environmental Group (SNEG) is a non-hierarchical student organization committed to climate and social justice activism. We strive to ground our work in anti-racism, indigenous sovereignty and community power. We meet Sunday nights at 8 p.m. in Hillcrest 103. All are welcome regardless of prior knowledge or experience. More information at go/dumpchase.

REDUCE THE WASTE: A PROJECT AIMED AT REDUCING FOOD WASTE IN MIDDLEBURY DINING HALLS

Op-Ed

***Shayiq Shah** is a member of the class of 2024*

When I was younger, my mum had a very simple rule for me and my brother: do not waste food.

We were to eat everything that we served ourselves and were not allowed to throw away any of the food on our plates. Admittedly, when you force children to eat, you run the risk of them developing unhealthy or even dangerous relationships with food; there are countless better ways to manage food education.

Having said that, my mum's intention was to make me and my brother realize the value of food, something I believe is essential for all of us to acknowledge and appreciate. After looking at the dining hall carousel trays full of leftover food, we might need to ask ourselves if we really appreciate the value of food enough.

College is a pivotal point in every person's life. For most of us, it is the first time we have agency over most of our decisions. Therefore, it is puzzling and disheartening for me to see the heaps of food left behind in the dining halls.

Throwing away food when you have agency over what and how much you serve yourself is something I believe to be quite avoidable

My curiosity led me to do some research on the issue, and what I found only alarmed me further. Approximately 40% of food produced in the United States goes uneaten, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council, with college campuses responsible for 22 million pounds of annual food waste. This would average out to each student wasting about 142 pounds of food each year.

I reached out to Brett Simons, the Ross dining manager, and learned of a study that had been conducted under the project name "Weigh the Waste" in the past. It weighed all food that was left behind by students in a single day in Ross. The data collected on that single day in April of 2022 revealed that 354.2 pounds of food were wasted.

More than 350 pounds of food, in one day, in one dining hall. Those figures demonstrated to me that our Middlebury community does not appreciate our food in the way that we should.

In response to this issue, I designed and executed a project in Proctor Dining hall called "Reduce the Waste" for my course in Community Connected Learning. It's aimed at achieving a behavioral change in the Middlebury community regarding student attitudes towards food in campus dining halls. The amount of visible food that is left behind on plates is something that alarms others as much as it alarms me. I hope to introduce an element of introspection and reflection surrounding our relationship with food at Middlebury.

The model of the project included a process wherein we weighed all the food that was left on students' plates for a particular meal. This weighing process would happen over an hour's time, and we would track the number of students who ate in the dining hall during that one hour. Our final weight of food, once divided by the number of students for that one hour,would give us an average amount of food wasted per student which could then be multiplied by the total number of students who normally eat in Proctor for that meal to give us a somewhat accurate estimate of total food waste

I am invested in this project because it investigates something that is quite foreign to me — the ease with which food can be thrown away. Finishing your food and ensuring none is wasted has been a big part of my upbringing and that of my peers from back home in India. Coming to the U.S. and observing peoples' casual and almost apathetic attitude when throwing away food is probably the only cultural shock I experienced. That, and the linguistic disaster that is the phrase "gas station."

The data that we collected and analyzed yielded the following results. Every four Middlebury college students waste an amount of food, each meal, equivalent to the amount needed to cater to one person. If we are to assume that we are a student population of about 2800, that would mean we waste enough food to cater to 700 people each meal for three meals a day.

If the numbers at all seem concerning, I invite you to reconsider your treatment of food in the dining halls and ask yourself, how can you do better?

It Happens Here 2023: Supporting survivors of sexual violence

Op-Ed

***Mei Dwyer-Frattalone** and **Amelia Grosskopf** are members of the class of 2024, and **Daisy Kulina** is a member of the class of 2026*

It Happens Here (IHH) is an annual anti-sexual violence tradition that began in 2012. The event aims to honor survivors of sexual violence by promoting awareness, solidarity and healing through the sharing of stories. IHH 2023 will be held on April 27 at 7 p.m. and will follow last year's structure, where survivors tell their own stories onstage and readers bring voice to anonymously submitted stories. While the event itself will not occur until next spring, the impact of IHH spans the entirety of the school year and beyond. For example, forming our organizing team over this past semester and outlining our intentions for IHH 2023 has been a process defined by solidarity and consciousness-raising. Thus, as an inclusive event dedicated to all survivors in our campus community, we want to make the organizing process accessible to the whole of the Middlebury community.

Over a decade after its founding, It Happens Here is still relevant. Two hundred seventy-one out of 1,128 respondents on the 2022 Middlebury Zeitgeist self-identified as a victim of sexual assault, where 105 respondents disclosed that their assault(s) occurred on the Middlebury campus. We know sexual violence is prevalent on our campus, and we have witnessed many ways in which survivors are still silenced. We are therefore motivated to give voice to survivors to share their stories through IHH 2023. Rather than giving attention to the perpetrators of sexual violence, we are committed to positively transforming our campus community by focusing on those who have experienced sexual violence. We believe that community healing is necessary to fuel the movement against sexual violence, and it all starts with the stories of survivors. By amplifying the voices of survivors, we shed light on the complexities of sexual violence and begin the work of shifting the Middlebury community away from rape culture.

Carrying on the tradition from IHH 2022, IHH 2023 aims to create a space for all survivors to be heard and believed. Speaking from experience, sharing our stories is emotionally challenging and requires extreme vulnerability. In recognition that healing from sexual trauma looks different for everyone and that survivors have different levels of comfortability in speaking on their experiences, we offer multiple forms in which survivors can share their experiences if they choose to do so. We wish to be accommodating and supportive of survivors, and thus survivors may share their own stories, anonymously submit their stories to be read by another or submit creative submissions to be displayed at the event. We envision an inclusive environment that promotes healing and fosters solidarity among individuals with various lived experiences.

We aspire to create transparency around the communities on campus that tolerate and perpetuate rape culture in any way. As a result of this event, we hope to shape our campus community into one that is more honest and accountable about its history of tolerating sexual violence. But, more importantly, we hope to shape a community that is willing to be proactive in preventing future instances of sexual violence. Throughout the process of making IHH 2023 happen, our goal is to prioritize survivors' healing as we help transform the Middlebury community into a safer environment.

We're looking for anyone interested in helping put on It Happens Here this coming April. We are not affiliated with any student organizations, college departments or other pre-existing groups; we are simply looking for individuals who are passionate about supporting survivors to join our team. Please join us if you're interested in supporting us by:

- Joining planning meetings
- Postering
- Volunteering to read survivors' stories at the event
- Compiling stories
- Serving as a crowd manager at the event
- Organizing readers
- Helping to create an art exhibit

And please feel free to reach out to dkulina@middlebury.edu, ndwyerfrattalone@middlebury.edu, or agrosskopf@middlebury.edu with any questions.

We hope to see you at IHH 2023. Together, we can change the Middlebury narrative around sexual violence as we strive to create an active community of care.

FROM THE ARCHIVES: SKIING AT MIDDLEBURY

By CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

Courtesy of Middlebury Special Collections

"From the Archives" is an opportunity for various writers to visit the Middlebury Special Collections and write about a different artifact each week. The Special Collections boasts over 10,000 historic items, and through this column we encourage writers to explore not only the college's history, but also the history of the world around us.

With the first snow on campus, eager students are already anticipating winter trips to the Snow Bowl to hit the slopes. While many consider skiing a crucial aspect of outdoor recreation in Vermont, the Snow Bowl and ski culture at Middlebury only rose to fame relatively recently.

Students started officially celebrating the winter season with the first Winter Carnival, originally Winter Holiday, in 1920. Initially, competing athletes skied down Chipman Hill, where a 27-meter ski jump was constructed.

Serious interest in the sport exploded in the 1930s after the 1932 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid. "Ski fever" gripped New England. The first trails at the Snow Bowl were cut in 1934, and Middlebury hired its first paid ski coach just three years later. The Middlebury men's alpine ski team put itself on the map with its first Winter Carnival victory in 1939. The women's alpine team also rose to fame in the 1940s, with a roster which included Middlebury's first Winter Olympian, Becky Fraser '46.

Although the popularity of skiing declined during World War II, it rebounded after the war's conclusion, and the program created more Olympians, including Leslie D. Streeter '55. Streeter, pictured in this 1954 photo, won the NCAA Skimeister Title in 1955 and continued skiing after graduation. He raced in almost every international competition from 1953 to 1957, and in 1956 he was named to the U.S. Olympic Ski Team and competed in Italy.

Streeter was a lifelong skier, and he opened a ski shop in Vail, C.O. before dying in a plane crash in Wyoming in 1986. Despite this tragic end, Streeter remains one of many impressive athletes from the college's early ski days.

Before the days of printed plastic ski bibs, athletes like Streeter used cotton cloth bibs.

This ski pinny was worn by one of Streeter's teammates, captain Peter Webber '57. This artifact from Special Collections is from the 1956 NCAA Skiing Championships held in Winter Park, C.O. That year, Middlebury established itself as a skiing star, finishing in third behind the University of Denver and Dartmouth College.

Over the next couple of decades, the college worked to improve the Snow Bowl. Ralph O. Myhre, its manager from 1951 to 1978, helped pioneer the development of a more modern facility.

In his book "The Strength of the Hills," historian David M. Stameshkin estimated that in the 1960s and 1970s, about 30 percent of students purchased passes and 90 percent of students who skied frequented the Snow Bowl.

In addition to old skiing action shots and team photos, Special Collections contains various Winter Carnival and Snow Bowl-related paraphernalia, including colorful decals that would have been placed on notebooks and suitcases..

Today, the Snow Bowl is one of only two college-owned ski mountains in the country and remains a popular destination during the winter months for skiers of all levels and ages. Although cotton bibs and notebook decals have been upgraded to printed bibs and water bottle stickers, a love for the Snow Bowl and skiing endure at Middlebury.

"THE MOORS" WINS THE WEEKEND IN THEATRE DEPARTMENT'S FINAL PRODUCTION OF THE SEMESTER

By ELIZA KING FREEDMAN
Senior Arts & Culture Editor

Middlebury's Theatre Department brought "The Moors" to Wright Memorial Theatre from Dec. 1–3. Directed by Assistant Professor of Theatre Michole Biancosino, "The Moors" employed current theatre and design classes to assist in both set and costume design, in addition to the impressive work done by the professionals of the Middlebury Costume Design Shop and the Production Studio. With a small cast of only six actors, "The Moors" focused on character development and specifics of the setting in a way that would not have been possible in a larger production.

Written by Jen Silverman, "The Moors" is inspired by the life of the Brontë sisters, who famously come from the English moors. The countryscape that inspired the insanity and loneliness of Emily Brontë's "Wuthering Heights," in particular, clearly informed Silverman's play. The plot of "The Moors" also directly parallels Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre," which includes a mad woman in the attic in just the same way that Silverman's play references Branwell, the master of the house who is exiled to the attic. "Branwell" also happens to be the first name of the only Brontë brother, perhaps an allusion to his irrelevance in the story of his sisters.

"'The Moors' may sometimes feel sloppy, but it's smart. Watching it is a bit like having a conversation with an ardent and intelligent Brontë devotee," wrote Ben Brantly in a quite fitting 2017 New York Times review of the play.

When asked about her opinion of the play and how it might resonate with a more modern audience, viewer Sophie Hiland '22.5 was quick to defend the performance. "Maybe it was the subjects or maybe it was because I'm a big fan of the Brontë sisters, but I was thoroughly impressed by every single aspect from the lighting to the costume design and makeup to the acting," she said.

In terms of the acting, the six performers who took the stage had many storylines to carry, and they did so gracefully. The play opened to sisters Huldy (Aidan Amster '23.5) and Agatha (Molly Dorion '22.5) sitting with their maid (Sophia Butler-Rahman '25) and dog (Will Napper '23) as they awaited the arrival of a new governess, Emilie (Catie Clark '22.5). The play thereafter revolved around three plot lines: Emilie's adjustment to life on the moors and the development of a romance between her and Agatha, a budding but dangerous love affair between the family's English Mastiff and a nearby moorhen (Meili Huang '23) and the maid Mallory's encouragement of Huldy's plot to murder her sister. While the written description of each of these plots may raise an eyebrow or two, they were woven together artfully by the cast, many of whom did so in corsets and hoop skirts.

With two of these three stories ending in gruesome deaths, and the third ending in something between heartbreak and tragedy, the play highlighted (often quite comedically) the craze that comes with solitude and the realities of life as a woman in the 19th century.

"We started working on this play in August when we began our dramaturgical work with a Brontë sisters book club, and from the start of our rehearsal process to now, we were able to spend time really delving into the characters and the text, which allowed us to discover the nuance that makes the play so fun. Because at least from what I gathered, while the play is somewhat haunting, it was often in the most off-putting moments that audiences enjoyed, and laughed at, the most," reflected Amster.

Amplifying the eeriness of much of the dialogue in the play leading up to its big finish was the lighting and set design. The main parlor's back wall raised up to reveal an impressive rendering of English moorland. The act of "taking a walk through the moors" seemed to always trigger a plot twist, and this concept was reflected in the way the set was designed and the noticeable way that lighting contributed to the storytelling effort. Lighting Designer Courtney Smith and Scene Designer Mark Evancho had their big moment during the second of two songs sung in the script, featuring an electric guitar performance by a blood-stained Huldy under a collection of colorful spotlights.

Courtesy Photo

"The Moors" cast in a field.

Amster reflected on her experience playing Huldy, and her semester preparing the production as a whole. "I had an incredible fall working with our director, Michole Biancoscino, and our wonderful cast and crew, and I think I can speak for all of us when I say we are so grateful for the turnout all three nights in Wright," she said. "Theater feels particularly important to me when I can see how it tangibly brings people together, from theatre lovers to those who may not have had the opportunity to see a production at Middlebury before."

"My BeReal went off but I was so engrossed in the plot that I had to ignore the chime," said audience member Martine Ma '22.5. If you weren't convinced of this play yet, just imagine a room full of Gen-Zers ignoring a BeReal notification — it must have really been something else.

For more information about "The Moors," visit GO/MOORSREF to view the gothic zine created by the production's dramaturg Bri Beach '23, which includes information about the history of Gothic literature and life on the English Moors.

The most important things we learned this semester

By SOPHIA AFSAR-KESHMIRI
Opinions Editor

The close of the semester can be a hectic time. Faced with a whirlwind of exams, papers and projects, it is easy to get caught up in the mayhem of trying to finish out the semester strong. The allure of the "A" is mighty, and it can make it easy to forget why we're all actually here: to learn. So, as a student body, what did we actually learn this semester?

"I learned how important religious literacy is," said Josh Glucksman '24, in reference to his experience in a comparative religion class.

Despite the amount of time we spend in the classroom, there are many opportunities to learn on campus outside of the academic buildings. For example, Glucksman noted that he has made use of this experience extensively throughout the semester in a setting other than his class.

"One way that I was able to live this learning, in the truest sense, was by moving into the interfaith house," Glucksman said. "I regularly had conversations about faith, god and metaphysics, and heard different answers to some of life's most profound questions: Where do we come from? Where are we going? Who are we?"

Similarly, Elizabeth Rightsmire '24.5 and Lauren Clarke '24.5 experienced their most valuable learning through their living situations on campus and in their social lives.

"[I'm] living in a single dorm for the first time, and deciding to go abroad in the spring," Rightsmire said.

She discovered a newfound sense of independence that she says is the most important thing she's learned this semester.

"This lesson has changed how I view myself," she explained.

"The most important thing that I learned this semester was how to balance taking personal time with seeing others," Clarke said. "I learned this mostly from being sink-mates with someone who enjoys interacting with others for more time than I do, as well as having multiple structured times to interact with people weekly."

Mei Dwyer-Frattalone '24 also learned something about balance. "This semester, I learned more about the importance of choosing battles to fight," she said.

Dwyer-Frattalone explained why this was an important lesson for her to learn. "As an activist, I can't fight for every cause, and to prevent activist burnout, I had to choose which projects I had enough energy for," she concluded.

For Sylvie Shure '24.5, rediscovering all that Middlebury has to offer its students opened her up to a whole new world.

"The most important thing I learned this semester was how to take advantage of the resources available to Middlebury students, like Midd2Midd and New England Review to name a couple," Shure said.

"My Midd experience has been much richer since I've started getting involved with the community more deeply. I've met new people and learned so much about the industries I'm interested in. Middlebury students have such good access to resources," Shure added.

Although this time of year is busy at Middlebury, it can be extremely rewarding to consider what you actually learned, where you learned it and how you learned it. Doing so may contribute to even more meaningful experiences in the future and ultimately enrich the learning you do at Middlebury. So what was the most important thing you learned this semester?

Editor's Note: Sylvie Shure '24.5 is an opinions editor for The Campus.

REEL CRITIC: "THE MENU"

By CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

"The Menu" serves moviegoers a not-so-subtle social commentary through intricate culinary dishes, a flavorful cast and a tight, tense setting. The film follows Margot (Anya Taylor-Joy) as she accompanies her date, Tyler (Nicholas Hoult), to an exclusive, elaborate dinner at Hawthorne, a restaurant on a private island. Hawthorne is run by militaristic head chef Julian (Ralph Fiennes), who lives and works on the island with a group of dedicated sous chefs.

At $1,250 a ticket, Hawthorne attracts an elite clientele. The guests include new-money tech bros, a wealthy but unstable couple, an aging movie star and a snobby food critic. Chef Julian crafts decadent, elaborately styled dishes like oysters with caviar and seaweed scallops, served with a side of secrecy, satire, madness and murder.

The movie is set almost entirely within the dining room, a location choice that creates a taut atmosphere. Hawthorne is an open kitchen, so dinner guests witness firsthand unusual rituals and dynamics. Eating at Hawthorne is about more than food; it's billed as an "experience." Before sitting down to dine, the guests are given a tour of the island where the chefs grow, smoke, ferment and prepare all the food.

While the film has more nefarious undertones, it also jabs at ridiculous, over-the-top food culture and the privilege of fine dining. Clearly, this grinding, sometimes shallow lifestyle has taken a toll on Chef Julian; he's lost his initial joy of cooking and eating and is struggling to get it back. The plot moves at an engaging pace, full of surprising and often-grisly twists. The ending ultimately circles back to familiar themes of class conflict, but the journey there is bizarre and nail-biting. "The Menu" is also quite gory, as murder is on the menu, and characters lose their limbs and lives through Chef Julian's twisted games.

Margot is an interesting outsider at the restaurant. She was Tyler's last-minute date, and while he is obsessed with the menu and idolizes Chef Julian, she is not afraid to be critical of the meal's excessiveness. They are served a series of dipping sauces without anything to dip in them, a "breadless bread course." Blindly obedient to this food culture, Tyler is blown away by the ingenuity of the "dish," while Margot boldly asks for bread (and is denied). As her complicated background and unusual relationship with Tyler are slowly revealed, she proves herself as the resourceful, grounding force of "The Menu."

Taylor-Joy is a highlight in this movie and a wonderful leading woman. She is well-matched with Fiennes, and their confrontations and discussions are full of electricity and tension. The privileged, out-of-touch supporting characters, including actors Judith Light and John Leguizamo, are also interesting and darkly funny. However, due to the nature of an ensemble cast, they are not afforded much depth, and it is a little puzzling how quickly they accept their fates.

COURTESY PHOTO

The food is a character within itself. The dishes are extravagantly presented and tweezed to perfection. Like cooking reality television shows, they are given close-ups and written descriptions. The film even hired a consulting chef, Dominique Crenn, of San Francisco's Michelin-starred restaurant Atelier Crenn, who worked behind the scenes to lend an expert eye to the dishes.

"The Menu" is an absurd, entertaining black comedy horror film that is definitely not for the faint of heart. Although the satire sometimes felt a little heavy-handed and outlandish, it's hard not to appreciate its creativity and social bite. Its unique food-based premise is memorable enough that even after the credits roll, you'll still be digesting "The Menu."

A STORY FROM ABROAD: A SHARED BOOKSTORE IN JAPAN

By SHAMAIL NASEER
Contributing Writer

A small sign promising a book store directs me up narrow, light blue steps to an open dark green door.

"Irrashaimase!" I hear as I enter a humble Japanese bookshop.

Stacks of square shelves face each other across the room as a table centers, directing my eyes towards a sunlit, flower decorated balcony. I look around curiously, finding the curation of this bookstore strange. I'm meant to work here for the next three months, and I have no clue what the purpose of this book store could be. So I begin digging.

Senichi Books, or "1000+1 Books," is a small bookstore located in Sengawa, Chofu in Tokyo, Japan. Home to 100 32-centimeter square bookshelves, the goal of 1000+1 Books is to create a space for people to express themselves through books that they're interested in by allowing people to purchase shelves and curate them as if each shelf were its own bookstore.

"That is the most important thing for Japanese [people], I think. They heavily compare with other people. They've had many comparative [exams] from elementary school, you know. But here, they don't need to compare to others. If they don't have that uniqueness, they can't create their bookshelves," Yucca Koinuma said.

Koinuma, my advisor, is a calligraphy teacher who is active at 1000+1 Books. She can normally be found in the store as a shopkeeper, hosting events or teaching calligraphy classes. Koinuma's relationship with calligraphy is reflective of 1000+1 Books's goal of guiding people toward self discovery. She believes that calligraphy's reliance on repetition inspires deep reflection of the self.

"People say that calligraphy is an art, but art adds new things right? New creative ideas, new creative ways, add, add, add. But calligraphy, it gets rid of the idleness of extra things. We do the same activities, it's really simple, you know, make a line, with [a] brush and black ink. We [use] simple activities to see our inside: how I am, what condition [I'm in]," Koinuma said.

1000+1 Books strives toward the same journey of self-understanding and introspection as calligraphy by providing a blank canvas for people to paint their inner selves on. Choosing to observe interactions rather than interrupt the flow with my Japanese, I noticed the ease that filled customers' eyes as they explored shelves filled with carefully selected recommendations. "Could I be up there too?" they must be wondering. Because I certainly am.

I discovered this gem through the Middlebury study abroad program requirement that every student engage in the Japanese community through various volunteering activities. Other volunteer sites include local schools, an on-campus farm and even an ikebana, or traditional Japanese flower arrangement studio.

COURTESY PHOTO

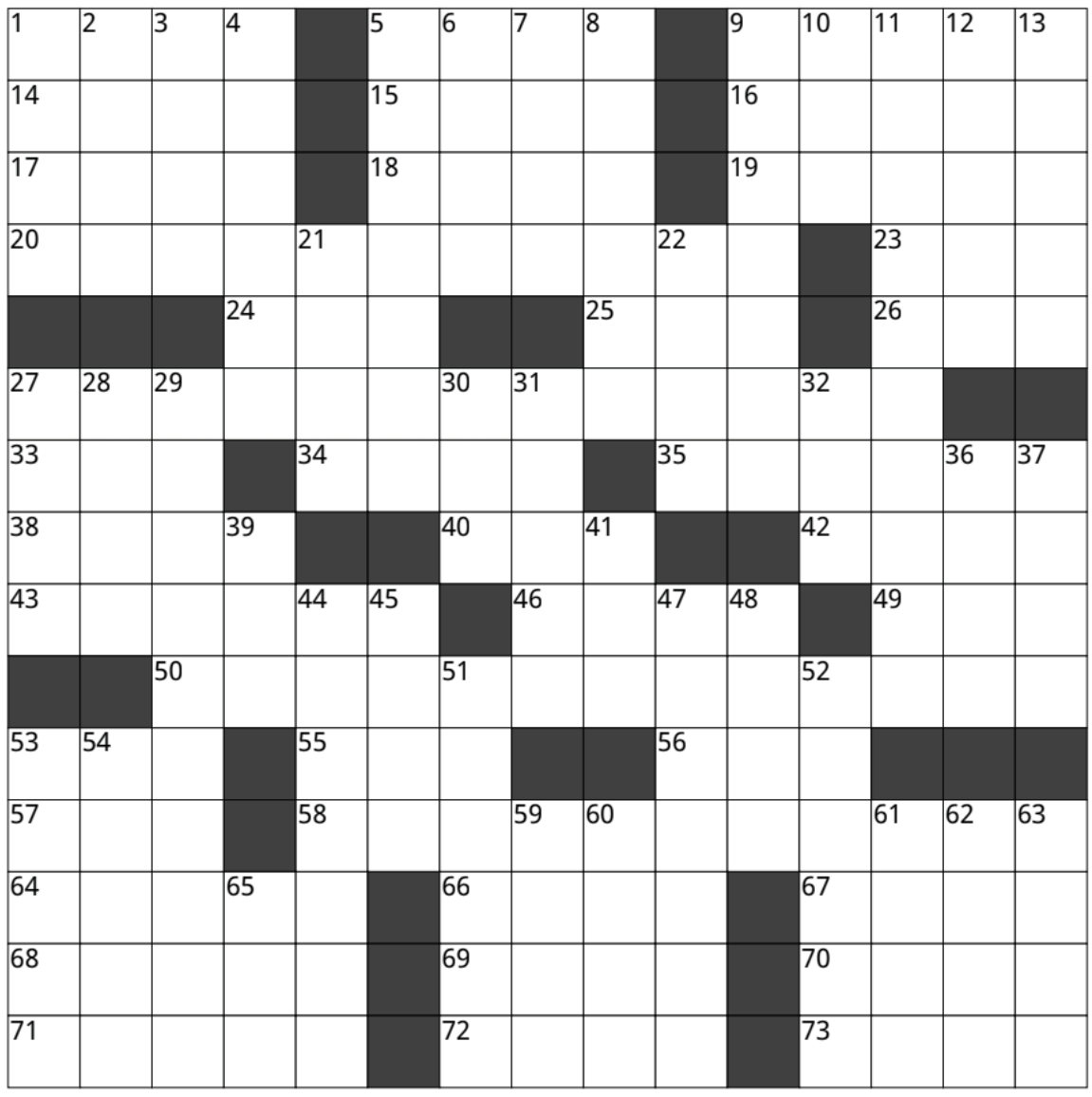
Aspiring to be a Japanese literary translator, I imagined a bookstore would be the perfect place to immerse myself in the environment of my future work. However, instead of understanding the work of a writer in Japan, I learned about the importance of community and expression at 1000+1 Books.

"It's purpose is to function as an "ee-bah-show" [a place where one feels a sense of belonging], to connect people and the city especially in a place like Tokyo where people are pretty detached from other people," said Ryo Nishikubo '23.5, who volunteered at 1000+1 Books in the spring semester of 2022. "It creates a space where people want to get to know each other, to like to connect with each other."

It's rare to discover a shop revolving around community with a strong emphasis on self-expression. It almost contradicts itself as a community space designed for self-expression, but I think that's what makes it so unique — encouraging people to be who they want to be around other people. It is a safe place to be yourself.

HOLIDAY-ISH CROSSWORD

By JOSH HARKINS
Contributing Puzzler



Across

1 Ingredients in nogs
5 Grooves in the road
9 Important person at a bris
14 Certain French wine
15 Ron's character on "The Andy Griffith Show"
16 Youngest Holmes sibling, in some works
17 African country with capital at Bamako
18 Knitting material
19 Tattlers
20 Drawn toward
23 College entrance exam.
24 One of a romance language?
25 ___ Lingus
26 Costello's "New Amsterdam" and The Beatles "Magical Mystery Tour," for short
27 What The Campus hopes you experience this winter
33 Wilder's "___ Town"
34 Against
35 Pronoun pair
38 One-eyed Norse god
40 NCO
42 Han, subject of "A Star Wars Story"
43 Kwanzaa candelabra
46 United States soccer legend Mia
49 Recede
50 What Brenda Lee says one should to be rockin' around this time of year, with "the"
53 "Honest" president
55 Love of a romance language?
56 19-Across's org.
57 Ludacris in the "Fast and Furious" franchise
58 Air travel perk for skirting through security
64 Soviet, now Russian, vodka brand
66 Disappearing sound
67 Words at the start of many a Reddit Q&A session
68 Fort Ticonderoga hero Allen
69 Cockney greeting
70 College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Aikman
71 What you might've hit if you're stuck
72 Bambi and Faline
73 Quaint lodgings

Down

1 Last Jane Austen novel published during her lifetime
2 Michael Jordan, to some
3 What you might win with a good dreidel spin
4 Excite
5 McCarthy crony who precedes Juan Perón in "We Didn't Start the Fire"
6 ___ dawn (early riser)
7 Michelin product
8 Japanese city hit hard by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami
9 Chanukah candelabra
10 Out ___ limb
11 One who shods a Kentucky Derby participant
12 Mount conquered by Alex Hannold in Yosemite
13 Goes the distance
21 Actress Taylor-Joy of "The Queen's Gambit"
22 Allen and Danson, for two
27 Pan's nemesis
28 Automaker with a logo resembling the Olympic rings
29 Robin Hood's nemesis
30 Extra periods, abbr.
31 What 9-Down and 43-Across and 50-Across represent in these cold winter months
32 Where to watch the Bronx Bombers from home
36 Hamburg river
37 Graduation attire
39 Informal dissent
41 Scottish hat
44 Label applied to more mature films
45 Goals
47 Words before "each other"
48 Hillary Clinton or Madeleine Albright, colloquially abbr.
51 Lathered (up)
52 Island seen in many a Gauguin painting
53 Sailing the ocean blue
54 Dodgers outfielder, the subject of many a successful wager
59 Tool used to vault
60 The R in LARP
61 Bring home
62 "Let's get moving!"
63 Informal assents
65 Mike Trout's team, on scoreboards

REEL CRITIC: "BLACK PANTHER: WAKANDA FOREVER"

By JACK TORPEY
Arts & Culture Editor

Courtesy Photo

After the sudden death of Chadwick Boseman in 2020, the star who embodied the Black Panther while silently suffering from cancer, there was likely not a single movie fan who did not want "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" to be a resounding success in his honor. And with writer-director Ryan Coogler returning to direct the sequel to 2018's "Black Panther," there shouldn't have been any doubt that it would be. Coogler is the director behind varied hits such as "Fruitvale Station" and "Creed," and he has carved out a niche for himself in Hollywood as a filmmaker with blockbuster ambition tempered by the humanist sensibilities of an indie artist. As such, the young director approached "Wakanda Forever" well-positioned to take on the emotionally nuanced task of at once delivering a superhero spectacle and a cinematic eulogy. When the credits on the nearly three-hour epic finally roll, however, it's hard to ignore the realization that even a director as great as Coogler couldn't do both. Save for its handling of Boseman's passing in a powerful opening sequence, "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" is an oddly unsatisfying film that suffers from a critical case of muddled character writing, stranding what could have been a triumphant tribute to a beloved hero on the growing list of Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) disappointments.

The film opens with a nation in mourning. T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman), the Black Panther and King of Wakanda, has died of an unknown illness, leaving behind his mother, Ramonda (Angela Bassett), to become queen. Within the secret borders of the African kingdom, Shuri (Letitia Wright), T'Challa's younger sister and Princess of Wakanda, buries the pain of her brother's death by immersing herself in scientific innovation. Shuri is disillusioned with her mother's reliance on rituals to cope with T'Challa's passing, which leads her to shun the possibility of taking up the ancestral Black Panther mantle in favor of pursuing technological advancement as the key to Wakanda's future. But when a race of aquatic warriors rises from the ocean depths and infiltrates Wakanda's once-impenetrable defenses, Shuri must confront her grief for her brother and find the faith to step into his role as the protector of her people.

The first 30 minutes of "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" consist of some of the most moving passages and exciting action in the MCU's history. Fans have long wondered how Coogler and his team would incorporate Boseman's death into the narrative, and the answer they received upon watching the film's opening sequence could not have been more gratifying. It is a reverent, characteristically understated homage to the ever-humble Boseman that is made even more poignant by the raw performances of the cast and composer Ludwig Göransson's reference to the "Ancestral Plane" theme from the original film. Coogler likely knew he would need to stage a standout action sequence to ignite the film after such a somber prelude, and he does just that with the introduction of the Dora Milaje, the royal guard of the Black Panther. Led by the fierce Okoye (Danai Gurira), the elite female warriors defend a Wakandan outpost from attack in a skirmish that is expertly cut to the words of Queen Ramonda delivering an impassioned address to the United Nations. This action scene, coupled with Boseman's tribute, offers real hope for "Wakanda Forever" being one of the best films in the MCU franchise. A good movie demands more than a strong beginning, however, and Coogler's latest does not sustain the greatness it teases at the outset.

The problem begins and ends with Coogler and co-writer Joe Robert Cole's treatment of the story element upon which "Wakanda Forever" was destined to succeed or fail: Shuri's succession of T'Challa as the Black Panther. For the first two hours of the film, Shuri is characterized as being fully dismissive of Wakanda's need for the Black Panther to return. Her brother is dead, and according to her, so is the Panther. As an audience, we feel the emotional impact that Coogler and Cole are setting up with this character choice, and we can anticipate the stirring moment when plot developments will force Shuri to finally fulfill T'Challa's legacy by becoming the Black Panther.

That moment comes, but it is not at all stirring. Shuri decides to undergo the ritualistic transformation after a tragic event that may or may not have influenced her decision. When the transformation appears to have failed, Shuri regresses into her former self, lashing out at the futility of the ritual. But when she accidentally discovers that she has superhuman strength, the young hero is suddenly all smiles. Coogler cuts to the money shot of Shuri dropping into the midst of a tribal gathering in full Black Panther attire, the score crescendos to a rousing peak, and we in the audience know that we are supposed to pump our fists.

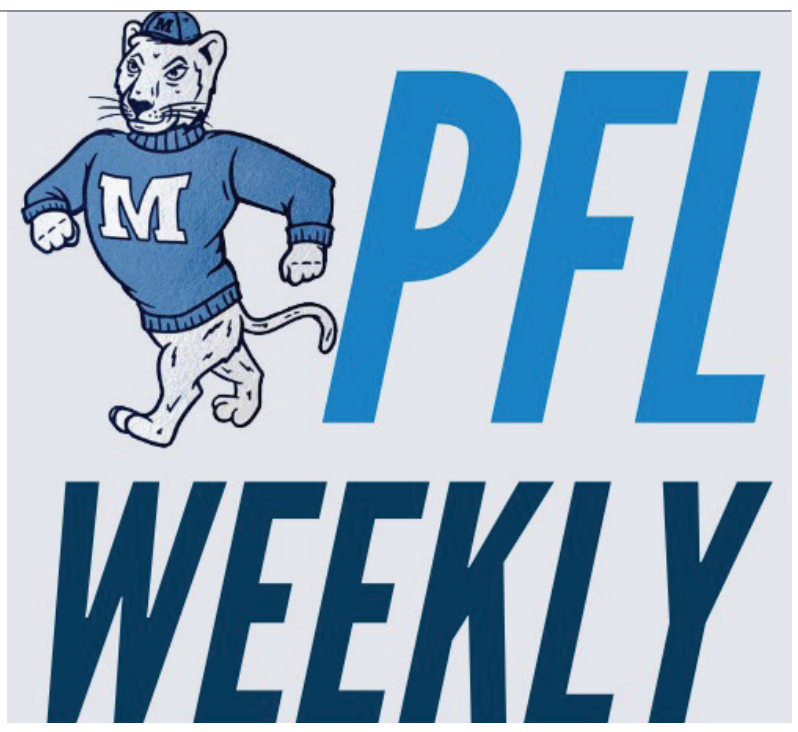
We can't, though — that reaction would be insincere. The past 10 minutes have been a whirlwind of unwarranted and rapidly alternating character changes that have left us reeling from emotional whiplash. Why does Shuri all of a sudden believe in the Black Panther? How does she so quickly recover from the disappointment of her ritual experience? Depending on individual interpretation, audience members will find themselves unable to provide answers or settling on ones that are frustratingly fickle. Either way, Coogler and Cole's unfortunate mishandling of Shuri's emergence as the Black Panther is an error so close to the heart of "Wakanda Forever" that it ultimately sinks the film as a whole.

IT'S TIME
FOR MOCHA
The snow has started to fall, which gives you another reason to try our selection of hot drinks while you warm up! Try our mocha drinks + more!
ONLY AT
CROSSROADS

PFL Weekly Podcast

By COLE SIEFER, DAN URCHUK, BEN WAGNER & SAM MCGARRAHAN
Podcast Hosts

Amazing feats, crazy wins and all the accolades you could want. This past week has been a great week for Middlebury Athletics. The field hockey team is headed to the NCAA Final Four. Bob Ritter's last game on the gridiron as head football coach was a high scoring contest against Tufts, landing the Panthers in second place in the NESCAC. The men's and women's cross country teams competed in a gritty race at regionals, with the men's team punching their ticket to nationals. Men's soccer's season came to a close as Michael McFarlane '22.5 and Jordan Saint-Louis '24 earned All-NESCAC second-team honors. The winter season nears with openers for swim, ice hockey, and basketball coming up this weekend. Check out our episode this week for this and an interview with Men's Cross Country's Alec Gironda '24 as his team prepares for nationals.



CAROLINE HARDING

WINTER SPORTS SEASON PREVIEWS

By CHARLES CROUNSE, LEXI LINAFELTER & JACK MCGUIRE
Sports Editors

Courtesy of Athletic Communications

Jenna Letterie '23 will be a player to watch this season for women's hockey

ALPINE

Coach: Stever Barlett
Captains: Tim Gavett '23, Bradshaw Underhill '25, Sophia Yubero '23
Athletes to watch: Bradshaw Underhill '25, Sophia Yubero '23, Axel Bailey '25, Ali Nullmeyer '24, Mike-Anne Reha '25
Background: The men's and women's alpine teams collectively earned 10th place at NCAA nationals last season, and after graduating several key skiers, will be looking for new faces to score points for the Panthers. On the women's side, Ali Nullmeyer '24 saw few NCAA competitions last year as she raced on the World Cup circuit, including scoring a 21st-place slalom finish in the 2022 Winter Olympics. Looking toward this season, Nullmeyer's NCAA competition schedule remains a question mark in the midst of FIS World Cup competition and a World Championship year. However, the rest of the team is more than capable of putting up strong scores, with skiers Sophia Yubero '23 and Mika-Anne Reha '24 returning following solid performances last year at NCAA nationals. The men's team also has a strong roster of returning skiers, hungry for a national title, including Bradshaw Underhill '25 and Axel Bailey '25. Preseason training and Noram competition will soon wrap up, with the carnival season beginning on Jan. 13 at Bates.

NORDIC

Coach: Andrew Johnson
Captains: Sam Hodges '22.5, Willson Moore '22.5
Athletes to watch: Logan Moore '25, Charlotte Ogden '23, Josh Valentine '24
Background: The Middlebury Nordic team is looking to have another strong season after finishing in 10th place in last years' NCAA skiing championships. Graduating only two seniors last year, the team is well-positioned to improve and continue their success. For the women's team, Ogden, an NCAA qualifier last year, leads a relatively young group of skiers with lots of potential. On the men's side, there are a number of qualifiers, led by Sam Hodges '22.5, who are ready to compete for victories. The Nordic team's season starts the weekend of Jan. 13 at the Bates Carnival.
Key competitions: Williams Carnival (away, weekend of Feb. 17), EISA Championships (away, weekend of Feb. 24)
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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Coach: KJ Krasco
Captains: n/a
Athletes to watch: Alexa Mustafaj '25, Augusta Dixon '24, Emily Downer '24
Background: The women's basketball team has made a decent start to the season, fighting back from an opening day loss to a 3–3 record. The Panthers have a relatively youthful squad, with only one player in their starting rotation not returning next year, so hopes will be high that they can continue to grow and improve throughout the season. Alexa Mustafaj '25 has been the team's go-to scorer so far with an average of 21.2 points per game and an impressive 47.8% shooting percentage from behind the three point arc, but Augusta Dixon '24 and Gabby Stuart '26 have both been effective scorers as well. The Panthers have six more games to fine-tune their tactics and chemistry before NESCAC play begins, and with head coach KJ Krasko at the helm – who led the team to their first national tournament appearance in 20 years back in 2019 – the Panthers could certainly peak just in time for league play.
Key Competitions: Union (home, Sunday, Dec. 11), Babson (away, Friday, Dec. 30), Amherst (home, Saturday, Jan. 7)

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Coach: Jeff Brown
Captains: Nash Goldman '22.5, Thomas Zodda '22.5, Alex Sobel '23
Athletes to watch: Sam Stevens '25, Noah Osher '23.5, Jaden Bobbett '25
Background: The men's hoop team made a hot start to the season, flying out of the gate with five straight wins before falling 72–70 to the #10 ranked University of Rochester. The Panthers will face stiff competition later in the season once NESCAC competition starts, taking on currently undefeated Williams and Trinity. However, hopes will be high for the Panthers and their talented lineup of players. This includes Alex Sobel '23, who currently leads the conference in points per game, rebounds per game and blocks per game. With a strong core of younger players around him, Panthers fans can expect the team to improve upon their NESCAC semifinal loss from last year, as they look to win their first league championship since 2017.
Key Competitions: Colby (home, Saturday, Jan. 14), Williams (away, Saturday, Jan. 21), Tufts (home, Saturday, Jan. 28)

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

Coach: Bill Mandigo
Captains: Jenna Leterrie '22.5, Eva Hendrikson '22.5
Athletes to watch: Jenna Leterrie '22.5, Cece Ziegler '25, Eva Hendrikson '23, Cat Appleyard '24.5.
Background: After a perfect 27–0 season and winning a national championship last year, the women's hockey team has high aspirations for this season. Despite losing major contributors like last year's NESCAC Player of the Year Maddie Leidt '22, the Panthers have a core that is highly capable of defending their national title. Letterrie, who led the NESCAC in goals and assists last year, with 32 and 26 respectively, is certainly expected to be the team's offensive contributor, but the depth of the team means the Panthers can excel on both offense and defense. However, it has not been smooth sailing to start the season. The team is currently 4–3 after losing back-to-back games to NESCAC rival Amherst this weekend. While this is not the start the hockey team was hoping for, they still have the talent and the mentality to contend for another national championship this season.
Key competitions: Bowdoin (home, Friday, Jan. 20 and Saturday, Jan. 21), Wesleyan (home, Friday, Feb. 3 and Saturday, Feb. 4)

MEN'S HOCKEY

Coach: Neil Sinclair
Captains: EMack Bentley '22.5, Bret Pastor '22.5,
Assistant Captains: Antonie Belisie '23, Billy Dobensky '23, Chris Garbe '24
Players to watch: EMack Bentley '22.5, Jin Lee '25, Andrej Hromic '24
Background: Middlebury men's hockey finished last season with a record of 6–13–3, ended by a first-round playoff loss against Tufts in the NESCAC tournament, and looking forward, hoping the young team showed promise for a more dominant 2022-23 season. Graduating only three seniors since last year, the Panthers currently hold a 1–5–0 record, dropping NESCAC matchups to Colby (3-2 OT), Bowdoin (3-4) and Tufts (0-5), and pulled out a win against Connecticut College (3-2) on Dec. 3. Returners Jin Lee '25 and Andrej Hromic '24 have emerged as top scorers, charting 3 and 4 goals respectively so far this season. Last year's top scorer, captain EMack Bentley '22.5 is another player to watch this season, totaling 24 points scored last season and one goal in the team's first six games. With a lot of tough competition left to go, time will tell if the Panthers will be able to turn their record around and make waves in the conference rankings.
Key competitions: Wesleyan (away, Friday, Feb. 3) and Williams (home, Friday, Feb. 10 and away, Saturday, Feb. 11)

WOMEN'S SWIM & DIVE

Coach: Bob Rueppel
Captains: Louise Kim '23, Lily Siemasko '23
Athletes to watch: Zoe Tray '25, Chloe Katz '25, Hannah Baumgartner '26
Background: Coming off a sixth place finish in last year's NESCACs, the Panthers are looking for a breakout year after a few seasons where they finished middle of the pack in the league. They have started the season with real promise, claiming an emphatic win over Connecticut College before falling to a competitive Amherst team, who are ranked #14 in the nation. First-year Hannah Baumgartner '26 has impressed so far this year, with three individual wins and a pair of relay wins to boot. The team has some young stars who are still full of potential, so they could be a dangerous team by the time the NESCAC championships roll around in February.
Key Competitions: Bates (away, Sunday, Jan. 8), Middlebury Invitational (home, weekend of Jan. 27), NESCAC Championships (away, weekend of Feb. 9)

MEN'S SWIM & DIVE

Coach: Bob Rueppel
Captains: Ethan Ding '23, Aidan McKenrick '23
Athletes to watch: Paul Shen '26, Riley Griffis '24, Ran Brown '23.5, Sam Hughes '25
Background: The Panthers are off to a 1–1 start to the season. The team narrowly edged out Connecticut College to pick up an opening day victory before losing heavily to Amherst. Despite the loss, the team came away with several positives, with the diving crew in particular shining. Ran Brown '23.5 claimed both the one meter and three meter dives, with Ryan Greguski '25 and Owen White '26 completing the podium in both events. The Panthers have an experienced coach in Bob Rueppel leading the way but have yet to find success in the NESCAC since their sole league title in 2002. The team has not finished above fifth in the league since 2013 nor appeared at the national tournament since 2018, so this season will be all about growth for the Panthers, as they fight to break their streak of three consecutive eighth places in the NESCAC.
Key Competitions: Bates (away, Sunday, Jan. 8), Middlebury Invitational (home, weekend of Jan. 27), NESCAC Championships (away, weekend of Feb. 16)

WOMEN'S SQUASH

Coach: Mark Lewis
Captain: Kieran Suntha '23.5
Athletes to watch: Lindsey Burnham '26, Abby Holding '25, Izzy Ronda '26
Background: The #17 ranked Panthers have made a strong start to the season, going 3–1 over their first four games. While the 2–7 scoreline looks unimpressive on paper, it does not reflect how close many of the individual matchups were, with the Panthers forcing several games past the usual 11-point finishing point. The Panthers finished 7–9 last year, but, given this season's start, they look likely to finish with a winning record. The team is also a fairly young one, with first-years Lindsey Burnham '26, Izzy Ronda '26 and Margaux Comai '26 usually occupying the #1, #3 and #4 positions respectively. The team will continue to grow and only get better as the season progresses, so fans can start getting excited about the Panthers' chances this year.
Key Competitions: Bates (away, Sunday, Jan. 15), Tufts (home, Sunday, Jan. 22), Dartmouth (home, Wednesday, Feb. 1)

MEN'S SQUASH

Coach: Mark Lewis
Captain: PK Keller '23
Athletes to watch: Nathan Feinstein '25, Will Lichstein '25, Caleb Boateng '26
Background: The men's squash team has made a tremendous start to the season, winning all four of their opening matches by a combined score of 32–4. The Panthers have looked dominant in all their matches to date, with several individuals still boasting unbeaten records. The road ahead will get harder, however, as the #23 Panthers have five matchups scheduled with teams in the national top-20. The team finished last year with a disappointing 5–12 record, so they have without a doubt improved greatly since then. Expect the Panthers to have some closer contests as the season progresses, but so far, there is no reason to believe they can't keep up their winning streak.
Key Competitions: Franklin and Marshall (away, Sunday, Jan. 8)
Williams (away, Thursday, Jan. 19), Amherst (home, Tuesday, Jan. 24)

Seven Questions with Mia Zottola '24, women's swim and dive team

By OWEN PARK
Staff Writer

Mia Zottola '24, from Arlington, Va, is competing in her third year on the women's swim and dive team. In this installment of Seven Questions, Zottola discusses her journey to collegiate athletics, the challenges of practicing through a Covid-19 impacted season and her scorching hot take on the best meal at Middlebury.

Owen Park: How did you first become involved in swimming?
Mia Zottola: I've been swimming for as long as I can remember. I started when I was about five or six, when my parents signed me up for my first lessons just so I could have the basics down. My dad swam in college, so I like to think that he's a big reason that swimming became such a big part of my life. After the first few lessons, I started practicing regularly but couldn't compete because I was too young. Later on, Marian, my sister, and I joined a team and began to swim competitively throughout the year.

OP: Did you always know that you wanted to swim in college?
MZ: Not really. During high school, I competed in lacrosse and swimming. When it came time to start thinking about the college process, I wanted to see which sport could get me into the best school. The recruitment process for swimming is much simpler and starts much later than other sports, so it wasn't on the forefront of my mind the same way it would be for other athletes. It wasn't until my junior year that I decided to focus on swimming and to drop lacrosse — the culture wasn't for me, and it's a very injury-heavy sport. As such, I began to look at colleges where I knew I could swim. From there, it was a matter of deciding which school I liked the best. Middlebury was by far my favorite. Growing up, I visited Vermont regularly, so the whole area feels really familiar and comfortable. I'm also a big skier, so being near the mountains is a big plus.

OP: What is your fondest memory of being on the swim team?
MZ: Honestly, there are a lot. My freshman year was marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, so we weren't able to have a real season. To make up for lost competitions, we held small meets in which the team was split into two smaller teams that competed against one another. The highlight of these meets were "stupid relays," which were relay races where everyone was obviously cheating and more focused on having a good time than anything else. I remember it being really fun because it was the first time that year that we were able to really enjoy an event as a team. One of the best parts of being a member of the swim team are the people and the amazing community it provides. There are about 80 people on the team, which means I can expect to run into someone that I know whenever I walk around campus.

OP: So did Covid-19 pose a big obstacle to your season?
MZ: For sure. Covid-19 hit when I was a senior in high school, and it caused all the pools around me to close down. Some people tried swimming in their backyard pools, which are way too small to properly train in. As for myself, I didn't swim at all that year. Even when I came to Midd, and our informal season began, we could only swim sprints and practice for an hour a day. Also, we were limited to swimming with only two people per lane with a clear one on each side. Essentially, we could still swim, but we were never able to fully practice. It was one of those situations where we just had to roll with the punches.

OP: Coming out of the pandemic, was it challenging trying to adjust back to a normal schedule?
MZ: Definitely. Last season was the first normal season since Covid-19 hit, and it required some effort getting used to normal practice conditions again. For example, having people swim close to me definitely took some time getting mentally readjusted to. Practices became longer than they were during the pandemic and were more specific based on the events you swam. Taking a full year off was definitely tough at first, but having swam for the better part of my life, I found that everything came back to me pretty easily.

OP: Looking to the future, what are you most excited about being on the swim team?
MZ: Honestly, I haven't thought about that. I'm always excited for our next meet, and I'm just enjoying swimming in general. Getting a new personal best time would be amazing, but I would say I'm more excited for the upcoming season as a whole than anything specific.

OP: What is your favorite meal on campus?
MZ: Bang-bang shrimp — apparently that's a really hot take. I'll fill up an entire plate of shame — my housemates' words — with nothing but that. I don't know what it is about the dish — I just really love seafood. Whenever I see bang-bang shrimp on the menu, I'm going to that dining hall. The most recent time that Midd served bang-bang shrimp, I wasn't able to get any, but one of my friends brought me an entire bowl of it, and I ended up eating it like popcorn.

Editor's note: This interview has been lightly edited for clarity and brevity.

Courtesy of Colin Borque

Mia Zottola '24 darts through the water during a freestyle event.

VOICES BEHIND THE DEI HAIR POP-UP

Rouchel McRae (left) and Sandra Calliste (right) working in front of the mural of Martin Henry Freeman.

By NADIA HARE
Staff Photographer

Calliste quickly braids a client's hair.

"This whole space is such a great atmosphere. I've been here every single day." –Brys Peralta

"Derisa is my cousin but she's like my sister," Sandra Calliste told me as she braided a client's hair in the lobby of the Anderson Freeman Center (AFC). "I raised her since she was little."

Calliste is the owner of Mane Beauty, a hair and cosmetics shop in Brooklyn, N.Y. Over fall break, Calliste and her assistant, Rouchel McRae, took a six hour train to support the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) hair pop-up organized by Fanta Diop '25 and Seif Alyosef '25, Middlebury College Student Government Association DEI co-directors.

I had the pleasure of speaking with Fanta Diop '25 who told me the initiative was an attempt to revitalize a pre-Covid tradition historically led by the Black Student Union (BSU).

While getting funding approved was a tumultuous process, Diop felt strongly supported by her friends. Specifically, Brys Peralta '25, Bakari Moitt '24, Tara Masri '25, Josh Wayland '25, Franchesca Belisle '25, Raymond Diaz '23 and Gloria Escobedo '23 were essential in terms of providing emotional support and aiding with the marketing of the pop-up.

"In order for this to be successful, we needed to prove that students needed it. They came, showed up, posted about it and spoke about it. Without them, I don't think I would have wanted to do this," Diop said.

Earlier that week, Diop had met with Derisa Collymore, the director of the AFC, feeling overwhelmed at the unfamiliarity of the inner hierarchies of the college and where to find avenues of institutional support. They met for five hours, and by the end of it, Diop felt redirected and her hope in the initiative was restored.

"Derisa has shown time and time again that she is somebody who will keep her word. If she says she is going to do something, then she absolutely will. She has not failed us, not once throughout this process," Diop said as people snapped in support around the room.

Collymore also aided in finding accommodations and transportation for Diop's mother, who filled in for a hair stylist that made a last minute cancellation.

Diop and her mother spoke to each other in Bambara, the national language of Mali. When I asked Diop about the qualities she admires most in her mother she immediately replied, "Her tenacity and determination. I don't think I've seen a more driven person in my life. I didn't expect her to make it up here, but she said she'd do it, and she came."

After getting to know more about Diop and her family, I made my way over to Sade Awodesu '25 who had been in the AFC that day for more than seven hours getting her hair braided. According to Awodesu, this is the fastest her hair has been braided.

"I had my old braids yesterday, and I had to take them out before this morning. Four people sat around me and took my braids out really fast. It took less than 30 minutes, whereas if I was alone in my dorm it would have taken four hours," Awodesu said.

In addition to being convenient, the DEI hair pop-up served as a safe space for communal gathering, which according to Awodesu, is unusual for a place like Middlebury that can at times feel stressful.

"This is a human space. We're taking care of each other," Awodesu remarked.

After hearing so much hype about Collymore, I stopped by her office to see if she was around. Even though she was furiously typing away at her computer, she welcomed me inside.

Over fall break, Collymore had spent more than 12 hours at the AFC assisting with the hair pop-up. The hair pop-up was a trial run for the AFC's future goal of implementing a permanent space at Middlebury and hiring a hair professional well versed in all hair types. Given the rural setting of Vermont, where haircare tends to be less accessible, this goal could better meet the needs of students.

Institutions are essential in maintaining traditions and keeping records to meet students' needs.

"When you build traditions, everybody remembers, and everybody knows how it's done. You leave that legacy of 'this is what needs to get done,'" Collymore said.

According to Collymore, the college's record keeping of traditions centered around BIPOC students, faculty and staff has been lacking. In the past, students have been left to do the majority of the organizing work surrounding creating traditions and community building in the absence of substantial institutional support. Traditions that are anecdotally passed down can become vulnerable to discontinuity.

Just as Diop mentioned earlier, Collymore has been keeping her word. Last year, Collymore and Janae Due, the assistant director of the AFC, organized the first ever Lavender Graduation. They also created stoles for first generation college graduates. "People make this a big deal, like, 'Derisa you've done so much!' No. This is the bare minimum," Collymore said.

"This space [the AFC] belongs to the students and it is a place that legitimately cannot be touched at this point. I know this is a safe space to build. That's what I can focus on and I know most people are with me at this point."

From left to right: Fanta, Brys and Bakari.

Sade sitting beside the ofrenda.

The "sisters": Sandra *(left)* and Derisa *(right)*.